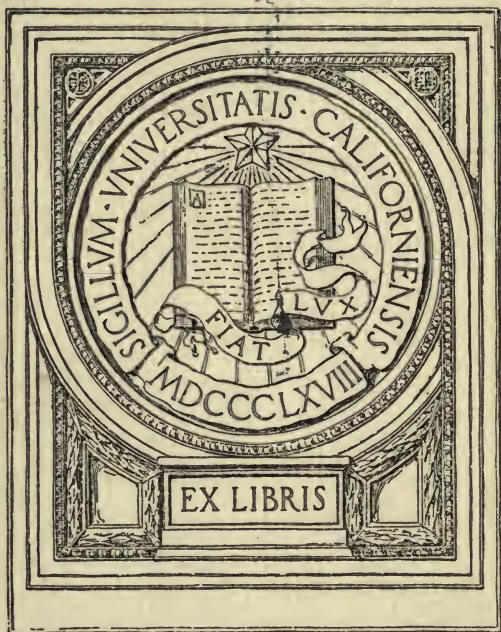




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Red
THE ODYSSEY.

OF

HOMER,

RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.

By MORDAUNT BARNARD, M.A.

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,
14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

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14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

1876.

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MAIN

TO MY WIFE,

ADELAIDE SOPHIA,

THIS LITTLE WORK IS DEDICATED,

IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HER ASSISTANCE

IN PREPARING IT FOR THE PRESS.

M. B.

P R E F A C E.

THE object of the translator is two-fold: to assist backward students in mastering the original, and to give English readers a simple and unambitious version, often differing little from mere prose. He has therefore made it as literal as the requirements of metre would allow, except, for obvious reasons, in two or three passages. "*Virginibus puerisque canto.*"

The liberty has been taken of sometimes omitting formulaic epithets, and of varying the names of Deities and the patronymics of men.

The marginal numeration of the lines refers to the original. The passages enclosed in brackets are of doubtful authenticity. The

absence of the translator from England may excuse a few errors or inconsistencies of punctuation, for which he and not the printer is responsible. It had been at first intended to publish the work in two volumes, but it now appears in only one. This will account for the blank page before the thirteenth book, and for the numbering of the pages in the latter part.

Villa Carabacel, Nice.

April 1876.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK I.

MUSE! tell me of the man with much resource,
Who wandered far, when sacred Troy he sacked;
Saw towns of many men, learned all they knew,
Winning his own life and his friends' return. 5
Yet them he saved not, earnest though he was,
For by their own temerity they died.

Fools! who devoured the oxen of the sun,
Who from them took the day of their return.
[Muse, child of Jove! from some source tell us this.] 10

The others, all who sudden death escaped,
Flying from war and sea, were now at home.
Him only, yearning for his home and wife,
Calypso, nymph adorable, detained
In hollow caves, and woo'd him for her spouse. 15
When with revolving years the year was come
In which the gods had fated his return
To Ithaca (nor there he toils escaped
Even among his friends), then all the gods,
Neptune except, compassion on him took. 20

He 'gainst Ulysses raged unceasingly,

Before that to his native land he came.
 To the far Æthiopians he had gone,
 The Æthiopians most remote of men ;
 Some near the setting, some the rising sun,
 To take a hecatomb of bulls and lambs. 25

There sitting he enjoyed the feast. The rest
 Were in the house of the Olympian Jove.
 The sire of gods and men began a speech,
 Calling the famed Ægisthus to his mind,
 Whom Agamemnon's son, Orestes, slew. 30
 Rememb'ring him, th' immortals he addressed :

' O strange it is how mortals blame the gods !
 ' They say their evils are from us, while they
 ' By their own folly have unfated woes.
 ' Thus, contrary to fate, Ægisthus took 35
 ' Atrides' wife, and slew him when returned ;
 ' Though knowing his own fate, as him we warned
 ' (And Hermes, watchful Argeiphontes, sent),
 ' Neither to kill him nor to woo his wife ;
 ' For that revenge would from Orestes come, 40
 ' When he grew up and claimed his own domains.
 ' This Hermes told him, but did not persuade,
 ' Though well he counselled him, Ægisthus' mind.
 ' Now for all this the penalty he pays.'

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered him :

' O father ! son of Saturn ! chief of kings ! 45
 ' In a befitting death full well he lies.
 ' So perish every one who does such deeds !
 ' But for the wise Ulysses aches my heart ;
 ' Ill-fated, far from friends, and suffering woes
 ' On th' island, where 's the centre of the sea ; 50

‘ A woody island, where a goddess dwells,
 ‘ The daughter of sagacious Atlas, who
 ‘ Knows of all seas the depth, and bears himself
 ‘ The pillars which support the earth and sky.
 ‘ His daughter that sad mourning man detains, 55
 ‘ And soothes with soft delusive words, that he
 ‘ May Ithaca forget. Ulysses longs
 ‘ Of his dear country but the rising smoke
 ‘ To see, and then to die ; but still thine heart,
 ‘ Olympian Jove ! relents not. Did not he 60
 ‘ Bring grateful offerings by the Grecian ships
 ‘ In the wide Troy ? then why so angry, Jove ?’

The cloud-compelling Jove replied : ‘ My child !
 ‘ What word has passed the barrier of thy teeth ?
 ‘ Could I divine Ulysses e’er forget, 65
 ‘ First among men in wisdom, first to pay
 ‘ Rites to immortals dwelling in the sky ?
 ‘ But earth-surrounding Neptune is enraged
 ‘ Inflexibly, because the Cyclops’ eye
 ‘ He blinded, Polypheme, of greatest strength 70
 ‘ Among the Cyclops. Him Thoösa bare,
 ‘ Daughter of Phoreys, ruler of the sea,
 ‘ Allied with Neptune in a hollow cave.
 ‘ Since then earth-shaking Neptune does not kill
 ‘ Ulysses, but detains him from his home. 75
 ‘ But come, let all of us deliberate
 ‘ For his return. Neptune shall moderate
 ‘ His rage, nor will be able ’gainst the will
 ‘ Of all th’ immortals to contend alone.’

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered him : 80
 ‘ O father ! son of Saturn ! chief of kings !

‘If ’tis the pleasure of the blessed gods
 ‘That wise Ulysses to his home return,
 ‘Let us send Mercury, the messenger,
 ‘Slayer of Argus, to th’ Ogygian isle, 85
 ‘That he may quickly tell the fair-haired nymph
 ‘Our purpose that Ulysses home return.
 ‘But I to Ithaca will go, and urge
 ‘His son, and courage in his mind will place,
 ‘That, having to a council called the Greeks, 90
 ‘He warn the suitors off, who constantly
 ‘Slay his fat sheep and slowly-trailing beeves.
 ‘To Sparta and to sandy Pylos I
 ‘Will send him to enquire what he may hear
 ‘Of his dear sire returning to his home,
 ‘And among men may have a noble fame.’ 95

She spake, and bound fair sandals on her feet,
 [Ambrosial, golden, which o’er earth and sea
 Bore her as swift as breezes of the wind ;
 And then her spear, tipped with a brazen point,
 Strong, weighty, firm, she took, wherewith the ranks 100
 Of heroes in her anger she subdues.]
 Down from Olympus’ tops she rushed, and stood
 In Ithaca, close to Ulysses’ porch,
 Upon the palace threshold. In her hand
 (Likening herself to Mentès, as a guest, 105
 A Taphian chief), she held a brazen spear.
 She found the noble suitors ; they their minds,
 Before the doors, were solacing with dice,
 Sitting on hides of beeves which they had slain.
 By them were heralds and attendants quick ;
 Some mingled wine and water in the bowls ; 110

And some with sponges, pierced with many holes,
The tables wiped and decked ; some carved the flesh.
Her much the first Telemachus descried,
For 'mong the suitors sad at heart he sate,
Beholding his brave father in his mind, 115
Should he but come the suitors to disperse,
His rank maintain, and rule his own domains.
Full of these thoughts, he left them when he saw
Minerva, and went straightway from the porch,
Vexed in his mind that at the gates so long 120
A guest should stand. Approaching her he took
Her right hand, and received her brazen spear,
And then addressed her with these winged words :
' Hail, guest ! kind treatment thou shalt have from us,
' And after supper shalt thy wants declare.'

He led the way : Minerva followed him, 125
And when they were the lofty house within,
Against a column tall he placed the spear
In a well-polished case, wherein there stood
Of brave Ulysses many other spears.
He led her to a throne, and placed a cloth 130
Embroidered fair, with footstool for her feet.
Then from the suitors placed a couch apart,
Lest by their clamorous din the guest annoyed
Dislike the meal in such proud company,
And that about his father he might ask. 135
From a fair golden ewer a maiden filled
A bowl, above a silver cauldron placed,
To wash, and laid a polished table near.
A venerable housekeeper brought bread,
[Piling up divers cates in full supply. 140

Dishes of various meats the carver set,
 And by their side the golden cups arranged.]
 And oft a herald went and poured out wine.

The noble suitors entered then, and sate
 In order due upon the seats and thrones. 145

The heralds poured out water on their hands ;
 The maidens high in baskets heaped the bread ;
 The young men crowned the goblets with the wine ;
 And on the feast prepared their hands they laid.
 But when for drink and food their appetite 150
 They satisfied, to other thoughts they turned ;
 To song and dance, which ornament a feast.

A herald gave to Phemius a lyre,
 And he reluctant to the suitors played ;
 But though he harped he yet delayed to sing. 155

Then to Minerva said Telemachus,
 Holding his head close lest the rest should hear :
 ‘ Dear stranger, wilt be angry at my words ?
 ‘ To these men harp and song are easy cares ;
 ‘ For they the substance of another eat 160

‘ Without their cost ; the property of one
 ‘ Whose whitened bones are weltering in the rain,
 ‘ Or on the land, or rolling in the wave.
 ‘ But if to Ithaca they saw him come,
 ‘ They all would pray to be more light of foot,
 ‘ Rather than richer be in gold and vests. 165

‘ He now by evil fate has died ; no comfort is
 ‘ To us, e’en though some man on earth should say
 ‘ He will return : of that all hope is lost.
 ‘ Now tell me this, and let thy speech be true,
 ‘ Who art thou ? whence ? what city, parents thine ? 170

‘In what ship didst thou come to Ithaca?
 ‘Why did the sailors bring thee? who are they?
 ‘For thou by land most surely couldst not come.
 ‘And tell me truly this, that I may know;
 ‘New comer art thou, or my father’s guest? 175
 ‘For many others to our house have come,
 ‘And he was very conversant with men.’

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered him:

‘Aye! I will truly tell thee all these things.
 ‘Mentes, the son of brave Anchialus, 180
 ‘I am, and rule the Taphians, fond of oars.
 ‘Now hither with my ship and friends I come
 ‘To strangers, o’er the dark sea sailing, bound
 ‘To Temesa for brass; and bright steel bring.
 ‘Far from the town in Rheithron’s harbour lies 185
 ‘My ship, beneath the woody Leïon.
 ‘Hereditary friends we claim to be
 ‘From times of old; if thou wilt go and ask
 ‘Laertes, aged hero, who, they say,
 ‘To the town comes not, but in distant fields 190
 ‘Endures calamities; and on him waits
 ‘An aged housekeeper, who food and drink,
 ‘When weariness comes o’er his limbs, supplies,
 ‘As through his vineyard’s fertile plot he creeps.
 ‘I came because they told me that thy sire
 ‘Was here, whose homeward road the gods obstruct. 195
 ‘For upon earth Ulysses is not dead,
 ‘But, living, by the broad sea is detained
 ‘Within a sea-girt island. Cruel men
 ‘Hold and restrain him far against his will.
 ‘But I will prophesy, as to my mind 200

‘ The gods suggest, and as I think will be,
 ‘ Although no prophet, nor in birds well-skilled :
 ‘ Not from his dear paternal land will he
 ‘ Be absent long, though iron chains may bind.
 ‘ Man of much craft, he’ll plan for his return. 205
 ‘ But tell me this, and let thy speech be true,
 ‘ If thou, so stalwart, art Ulysses’ son.
 ‘ Much thou resemblest him in head and eyes ;
 ‘ For we repeatedly together met
 ‘ Before he went to Troy, where other chiefs 210
 ‘ Went of the Grecians in their hollow ships ;
 ‘ Him from that time I saw not nor he me.’

Prudent Telemachus to her replied :

‘ Guest ! I will speak to thee with perfect truth.
 ‘ My mother says that I’m his son, but I 215
 ‘ Know not, nor any son his father knows.
 ‘ The son I should be of a wealthy man,
 ‘ Whom of his own domains old age finds lord.
 ‘ But now of one beyond all men distressed
 ‘ They call me son ; since this thou dost enquire.’ 220

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, spake again :

‘ The gods have not inglorious made thy birth,
 ‘ Whom, such a son, Penelope has borne.
 ‘ But tell me this, and let thy words be true :
 ‘ What is this feast, this concourse ? and what need 225
 ‘ For thee ? what banquet, or what marriage-day ?
 ‘ Not one where all a contribution make,
 ‘ For with proud insolence they seem to feast ;
 ‘ And any prudent man would angry be,
 ‘ Who should come near and such foul deeds behold.’

The wise Telemachus replied and said : 230

‘ Guest! since these questions thou dost ask and urge,
‘ There was a time when this house used to be
‘ Honoured and rich, while that man was at home.
‘ Now the gods, planning ills, have changed its state,
‘ And have of all men left him most obscure. 235
‘ I should not grieve so much if he had died →
‘ Among his own companions, slain at Troy,
‘ Or in his friends’ hands, when the war was done.
‘ Then would the Greeks have built his tomb, and he
‘ Both for himself and son have earned renown. 240
‘ Whirlwinds ingloriously have borne him off;
‘ Unknown, unheard of, he is gone, and left
‘ Nothing behind for me but griefs and groans.
‘ Nor for him only do I weep and wail,
‘ For evil cares on me the gods have brought.
‘ As many chiefs as o’er the islands rule, 245
‘ Samos, Zacynthus, and Dulichium,
‘ And who bear sway in rocky Ithaca,
‘ All woo my mother, and despoil the house.
‘ And she the hateful marriage nor denies
‘ Nor can conclude. They gluttonously waste 250
‘ My house, and quickly will destroy myself.’

Pallas Minerva said indignantly :

‘ O shame ! Ulysses’ absence well thou may’st
‘ Regret, for on the shameless suitors he
‘ Would lay his hands. E’en at the entrance gates 255
‘ Were he to stand with helm, shield and two spears,
‘ Such as when first I knew him in our house,
‘ [In revelry and joy, from Ephyra
‘ And Ilus, son of Mermerus, returned.
‘ Ulysses thither in his swift ship went, 260

‘To seek for deadly poison to besmear
 ‘His brazen arrows, but he gave it not,
 ‘Fearing the anger of th’ immortal gods ;
 ‘My father gave it, for he loved him much.]
 ‘If such Ulysses met the suitors now, 265
 ‘Swift death and bitter wooing they would have.
 ‘But in the gods’ lap all these things repose,
 ‘Whether for vengeance he return or not
 ‘To his own house. I bid thee to reflect
 ‘How thou canst drive the suitors from thine house. 270
 ‘Come then, consider and regard my words.
 ‘To-morrow to a council call the Greeks,
 ‘Harangue them all, and let the gods attest ;
 ‘The suitors bid thou to their homes disperse.
 ‘To wedlock if thy mother’s mind inclines, 275
 ‘Let her to her great father’s house return.
 ‘The marriage they will fix ; the bridal gifts,
 ‘As for a daughter dear are fit, prepare.
 ‘Thyself I’ll counsel, if thou wilt obey :
 ‘With twenty rowers thy best ship supply, 280
 ‘And thy long absent father go to seek,
 ‘If men can tell thee, or from Jove the voice,
 ‘Which chiefest brings report to men, thou hear’st.
 ‘Go first to Pylos, and of Nestor ask ;
 ‘To Sparta next and Menelaus fair, 285
 ‘For he of well-armed Greeks has come the last,
 ‘If thou canst learn thy sire’s return and life ;
 ‘And there, however vexed, remain a year.
 ‘If thou shouldst hear that he is dead, nor more
 ‘Alive, to thy dear native land return ; 290
 ‘To him erect a monument, and pay,

‘As is befitting, all funereal rites,
 ‘And to another spouse thy mother give.
 ‘And when all this thou hast completely done,
 ‘Then counsel take within thy mind and thought,
 ‘How thou may’st slay the suitors in thine house, 295
 ‘By craft or openly : it is not fit
 ‘To play a child’s game when no longer such.
 ‘Hast thou not heard what fame Orestes gained
 ‘From all, who killed his father’s murderer,
 ‘Crafty Ægisthus, slayer of his sire ? 300
 ‘And thou, dear youth, whom fair and strong I see,
 ‘Be brave, that future men may speak of thee.
 ‘But to my swift ship I will now go down,
 ‘And to my friends who wait for me and grieve.
 ‘Take thou good heed, and think upon my words.’ 305

To her the wise Telemachus replied :

‘Guest ! thou hast spoken with kind thoughts, as might
 ‘Father to son, and I will ne’er forget.
 ‘But stay thou now, though eager to depart,
 ‘That, having bathed and gratified thine heart, 310
 ‘Thou to thy ship may’st with a present go
 ‘Rejoicing, very precious, beautiful,
 ‘A keepsake, such as hosts to loved guests give.’

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered him :

‘Stay me not now when eager to depart. 315
 ‘As to the gift which thy kind mind suggests,
 ‘Give it on my return to carry home,
 ‘And I will give one worthy of exchange.’

Blue-eyed Minerva spake and sped away,
 Swift as an eagle flies ; and in his heart 320
 Put strength and courage, calling to his mind,

More than before, his father; and he thought
Admiringly, and deemed it was a god.

Then to the suitors went the god-like man.

To them a bard was singing, of renown. 325

They sate and listened silently, while he
Was hymning the return of Greeks from Troy,
Which Pallas had decreed should mournful be.

From her high chamber heard the song divine
Icarius' daughter, wise Penelope,

And on the lofty stair, but not alone, 330

Came down; two maidens followed in her steps.

When to the suitors came the noble dame,

She by a column of the well-wrought roof

Stood with a shining kerchief o'er her cheeks,

While on each side a modest maiden stood, 335

And weeping thus the bard divine addressed :

' O Phemius ! thou knowest other songs

' Which mortals charm, the deeds of Gods and men,

' Which bards recite : sit there and sing them one

' Of those, and let them listen, as they drink 340

' Their wine ; but cease from this lugubrious song,

' Which always vexes in this breast my heart ;

' For on me comes my unforgotten grief.

' So long I for, and in my mem'ry hold

' That man whose fame o'er Greece and Argos spreads.'

The wise Telemachus in answer said : 345

' Mother ! why grudgest thou the much loved bard

' To charm us at his will ? for not the bards

' Are to be blamed, but Jove is blameable,

' Who gives inventive men whate'er he wills.

' To him no blame who sings the Grecians' fate. 350

‘ Men on that song confer the most renown
 ‘ Which is the newest to them as they hear.
 ‘ Ulysses not alone lost his return
 ‘ In Troy; for many other men have died. 355
 ‘ Enter the house, and thine own works control,
 ‘ The loom and distaff, and command thy maids
 ‘ To ply their tasks. Speech is the part of men,
 ‘ And specially of him who rules the house.’

She wond’ring went again within the house, 360
 And pondered in her mind her son’s wise speech.
 With maids attendant, to the upper room
 She climbed, and there her husband dear bewailed,
 Till on her eyes sweet sleep Minerva shed.
 The suitors shouted through the shady halls, 365
 And they all prayed to lie beside her couch.
 To them the wise Telemachus began :

‘ Ye suitors of my mother ! haughty ! proud !
 ‘ Let us enjoy the feast ; let clamour cease.
 ‘ ’Tis good that we should listen to a bard 370
 ‘ Like this, an equal to the gods in voice.
 ‘ Let us to-morrow in a council sit,
 ‘ That I may fearlessly command you all
 ‘ To leave this house. Go, look for other feasts,
 ‘ Consuming your own goods from house to house ; 375
 ‘ But, if it seems to you a better thing
 ‘ That one man’s substance perish unavenged,
 ‘ Waste it ! but I th’ immortal gods will pray
 ‘ That Jove may grant these deeds to be repaid,
 ‘ And in this house ye unavenged may die.’ 380

He spake : they all, with teeth fixed in their lips,
 Admired what boldly spoke Telemachus.

Antinous, Eupéithes' son, replied :

'Thee, O Telemachus ! the gods themselves
'Teach to be proud and confident in speech. 385

'Never in sea-girt Ithaca may Jove
'Make thee the king, by thy paternal right !'

✓ Prudent Telemachus again replied :

'Wilt thou, Antinous, at what I say
'Be angry ? This, if Jove would grant, I wish. 390

'Dost thou think this the worst thing among men ?

'Tis no bad thing to govern. A king's house
'Is rich, and he is honoured above all.

'Yet many other Grecian princes are
'In sea-girt Ithaca, both young and old. 395

'Let one of them take this, since now is dead
'Divine Ulysses. I will be the king

'Of our own house, and of the servants whom
'Divine Ulysses as a booty gained.'

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,

Replied : 'Telemachus ! these things are laid 400
'In the gods' lap, who of the Greeks shall reign

'In sea-girt Ithaca. Do thou retain

'Thine own possessions, and thine own house rule.

'Ne'er may the man come who against thy will

'May rob thee, while men dwell in Ithaca !

'But, friend ! I wish to ask about the guest : 405

'Whence is this man ? from what land does he boast

'To be ? what race ? what his paternal soil ?

'Brings he a message of thy coming sire,

'Or comes he seeking objects of his own ?

'He rushed away, and stayed not to be known, 410

'Resembling no mean man in countenance.'

Prudent Telemachus to him replied :

‘Eurymachus ! my sire’s return is lost ;
 ‘No tidings can I trust that he will come,
 ‘Nor heed what soothsaying my mother seeks, 415
 ‘When she invites some prophet to the house.
 ‘Friend of my father and myself, the guest,
 ‘Mentes, from Taphos comes, and boasts to be
 ‘Son of Anchialus, well-skilled in war ;
 ‘And o’er the Taphian mariners he rules.’

So spake Telemachus, but in his mind 420
 Th’ immortal goddess knew. They to the dance
 And to the charming song delighted turned,
 And stayed till ev’ning came and on them there,
 Still revelling, the dusky ev’ning came.
 Then each went home with purpose of repose.
 Telemachus, whose lofty chamber was 425
 Built in the hall, a place seen far around,
 Went to his couch with many thoughts and cares.
 Euryclēa, skilled housekeeper, brought lights,
 Daughter of Ops, who was Peisēnor’s son.
 Her with his wealth Laertes bought of yore, 430
 Yet in her prime, and twenty oxen gave.
 Her he respected like his own good wife,
 Shunning whose wrath he went not to her couch.
 The flaming torch she bore ; of all the maids
 She loved him most, and nursed him when a babe. 435
 He opened then the well-made chamber doors,
 And sitting on the couch he doffed his vest,
 And placed it in the careful matron’s hands.
 The vest she smoothed, and folded up and hung
 Upon a peg beside the well-turned bed, 440

And from the chamber went : the door she closed
With silver ring and with a thong-tied bolt.
There, covered with a fleece of wool, all night
He deeply thought on what Minerva said.

BOOK II.

WHEN new-born rosy-fingered morn appeared,
Ulysses' dear son from his couch up-sprang ;
Dressed, and his sharp sword o'er his shoulder placed,
Bound his fair sandals on his shining feet,
And from his chamber like a god came forth. 5
Forthwith the loud-voiced heralds he desired
To call to council all the long-haired Greeks :
They called them, and they all assembled quick.
When gath'ring they in full assembly were,
He to the council went, and in his hand 10
He held a brazen jav'lin ; not alone,
For two swift dogs accompanied his steps.
A grace divine Minerva o'er him shed ;
And as he went the people all admired.
He took his father's seat : old men gave way.
Egyptius, the hero, then began, 15
Bowed down by age and knowing many things ;
For with divine Ulysses his dear son
Went in the hollow ships to well-horsed Troy,
The warlike Antiphus ; him Cyclops fierce
Slew in the cave, and feasted on him last. 20

Three more there were ; one joined the suitors' band,
Eurynomus ; two tilled their father's fields.

Still in deep grief he ne'er forgot his son ;

So, shedding tears, he thus harangued and said :

' Listen, ye Ithacans ! to what I say. 25

' Nor council nor assembly has there been

' Since in his hollow ships Ulysses went.

' Who calls us now ? on whom comes so much need,

' Or of the older or the younger men ?

' What tidings of the army has he heard, 30

' Which, first to learn, he may reveal to us ?

' What public news does he declare and tell ?

' He must be good ; may he be gratified !

' Jove grant him all the purpose of his mind !'

He spake ; at th' omen joyed Ulysses' son, 35

Nor long he sate, for he desired to speak.

In the mid concourse of the crowd he stood.

A herald, well in prudent counsels skilled,

Peisēnor, placed a sceptre in his hands.

The old man touching first, he thus began : 40

' Old man ! he is not far, as thou shalt see,

' For it is I who have the council called.

' On me the most of all has sorrow come.

' No tidings of the army have I heard,

' Which, first to learn, I may reveal to you ;

' Nor public news do I declare and tell :

' Mine is the need, for ill befalls my house, 45

' Doubly, for I a father good have lost,

' King of you all, and as a father mild.

' Now there is e'en a greater ill, which soon

' My house will ruin, and my substance waste.

‘ Suitors invade my mother ’gainst her will, 50
‘ Sons of the men who are the noblest here,
‘ Who are reluctant that she should return
‘ Unto her father’s house, Icarus,
‘ Who would endow his daughter, and betroth
‘ To whom she will, and who comes most preferred.
‘ Our palace they frequenting ev’ry day, 55
‘ And slaying oxen, sheep, and fatted goats,
‘ Upon them feast, and drink the sparkling wine.
‘ Much wanton waste is made, nor is there one,
‘ Such as Ulysses, from our house to drive
‘ The woe, which we are powerless to do ; 60
‘ Else were we pitiful and spiritless.
‘ I would repel them, if I had the power,
‘ For deeds no longer to be borne are done.
‘ My house is desolated ; ye yourselves
‘ Should be indignant, and feel shame before 65
‘ Those who dwell near. Dread too the wrath of Gods,
‘ Lest they turn angry round on these base deeds.
‘ Olympian Jove and Themis I invoke,
‘ For she dissolves men’s councils and convenes.
‘ Hold, friends ! and let me pine alone in grief ; 70
‘ Unless it be indeed that my good sire,
‘ Ulysses, e’er wrought evil to the Greeks :
‘ Then in requital do these hostile deeds,
‘ And urge the suitors on. ’Twere best for me
‘ That ye should eat my goods and revenues ; 75
‘ For if ye did there soon would be revenge,
‘ And through the city I would urge my plea,
‘ And re-demand my goods till all were paid,
‘ But now ye cause me woes without redress.)

He spake in anger, and upon the ground 80
He threw the sceptre, bursting into tears ;
And pity came on all the people round.
The rest in silence sate, and no one dared
Answer the fierce words of Telemachus.

Antinous alone replied and said :

‘Telemachus ! proud speaker ! uncontrolled ! 85

‘What hast thou said to shame us ? thou wouldst fix

‘Derision on us ; yet in no respect

‘The Grecian suitors should be blamed by thee ;

‘Thine own dear crafty mother is to blame.

‘’Tis the third year, and soon will come the fourth,

‘Since she misleads the hearts and minds of Greeks ; 90

‘Gives hope to all ; gives promises to each ;

‘Sends messages ; but other things designs.

‘This other craft she in her mind devised ;

‘Within her halls a web she fixed and wove,

‘Fine, beyond measure large ; and said to us : 95

‘“Young suitors ! since Ulysses now is dead,

‘“Delay to urge my marriage on me till

‘“The web I finish, lest my threads be vain.

‘“For brave Laertes ’tis a winding sheet,

‘“When of long-sleeping death the fate shall come ; 100

‘“That no Greek matron may indignant be

‘“That one so rich should die without a shroud.”

‘This said she, and our noble mind agreed.

‘She, while by day the ample web she wove,

‘Unravell’d it by torch-light in the night. 105

‘Three years by craft she thus misled the Greeks ;

‘But when the fourth year came and hours went on,

‘One of her women told, who knew it well,

‘ And her we found unravelling the web :
‘ So she completed it against her will. 110
‘ Thus answer thee the suitors, that both thou
‘ In thine own mind, and all the Greeks may know.
‘ Thy mother send away, and bid her wed
‘ Him whom her father bids and she approves.
‘ If she shall long perplex the sons of Greece, 115
‘ (Thinking those counsels which Minerva gives,
‘ Skilful in beauteous works and prudent thoughts,
‘ And in such wiles as never have we heard
‘ Of any fair-haired Greeks who lived of yore, 120
‘ Tyro, Alcmēne, and Mycēne fair,
‘ Who had no deep thoughts like Penelope ;
‘ Yet injudicious was this thought of hers).
‘ Thy goods and substance they will still consume,
‘ So long as she retains the mind which now
‘ The Gods plant in her ; bringing to herself 125
‘ Fame, but to thee regret for loss of wealth.
‘ Nor to our fields nor elsewhere will we go,
‘ Till of the Greeks she marries whom she will.’

Prudent Telemachus to him replied :

‘ Antinous ! it cannot be that I 130
‘ Should from the house against her will repel
‘ Her who gave birth to, and who brought me up.
‘ Either my father lives in other lands,
‘ Or he is dead. Ill would it be for me
‘ To make large payments to Icarius,
‘ If I myself my mother sent away.
‘ For from my father I shall suffer woes, 135
‘ And God will others add, should she invoke
‘ The hateful Furies when she goes from home :

' And from men too will vengeance come ; thus I
 ' Will never utter such a word as this.
 ' If for these things thy mind has any awe,
 ' Go from my house, and look for other feasts,
 ' Consuming your own goods from house to house. 140
 ' But, if it seems to you a better thing
 ' That one man's substance perish unavenged,
 ' Waste it, and I th' immortal gods will pray
 ' That Jove may grant these deeds to be repaid,
 ' And in the house you unavenged may die.' 145

So spake Telemachus : wide-thund'ring Jove
 Sent forth two eagles from a mountain top,
 Who flew awhile, swift as the gales of wind,
 Near to each other, stretching out their wings.
 When to the noisy forum's midst they came, 150
 Shaking their wings they often wheeled around,
 Looked on the heads of all, and boded death ;
 Then, clawing one another's cheeks and necks,
 Rushed through the roofs and city to the right.
 Men wondered as upon the birds they gazed, 155
 And in their minds mused how these things would end.

To them th' old hero, Alitherses, spoke,
 From Mastor sprung : for he alone excelled
 His equals, birds to know and fates foretell ;
 Who, wishing well to them, harangued and said : 160
 ' Now listen, Ithacans ! to what I say,
 ' And to the suitors specially declare.
 ' A mighty woe rolls o'er them ; for not long
 ' Ulysses will be from his friends apart,
 ' But even now is near, and for them all
 ' Is planning death and fate ; and woes shall come 165

- ‘ On us who dwell in sunny Ithaca.
 ‘ Let us consult to stay it ere it comes.
 ‘ Let them forthwith desist ; ’tis best for them.
 ‘ Not inexperienced but skilled I prophesy. 170
 ‘ I say that all is now to him fulfilled,
 ‘ As I had told him, when the Greeks for Troy
 ‘ Embarked, and wise Ulysses with them went ;
 ‘ That, having suffered much, lost all his friends,
 ‘ He unexpected, in the twentieth year, 175
 ‘ Would home return : which all is now fulfilled.’
 Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,
 Replied : ‘ Old man ! go home and prophesy
 ‘ To thine own children lest they suffer wrong.
 ‘ Herein I better prophet am than thou. 180
 ‘ Many birds fly beneath the sun ; not all
 ‘ Are sent by fate ; far off Ulysses died ;
 ‘ I would that thou hadst also died with him,
 ‘ So wouldst thou not have told such prophecies,
 ‘ Nor thus have roused Telemachus to wrath, 185
 ‘ Looking that some gift to thine house he make.
 ‘ But this I tell thee, and it shall be done ;
 ‘ Shouldst thou, who knowest many ancient things,
 ‘ Cheat and excite a younger man to rage,
 ‘ First it shall be more grievous to himself, 190
 ‘ [Nor in his object shall he have success.]
 ‘ On thee, old man ! we will a fine impose,
 ‘ Hard to be paid ; and bitterly thou’lt grieve.
 ‘ I publicly advise Telemachus
 ‘ To bid his mother to her sire return. 195
 ‘ They will arrange the marriage, fix the dower
 ‘ Which a dear child’s espousal should attend.

‘ I deem not that the Grecians will desist
 ‘ From their stern courtship : no one do we fear,
 ‘ Not e’en Telemachus, though full of words. 200
 ‘ Nor need we prophecies, which thou, old man !
 ‘ Speakest in vain, and shalt be hated more.
 ‘ Still shall his goods be eaten, nor be made
 ‘ Any equivalent to him, so long
 ‘ As to the Greeks her marriage she delays. 205
 ‘ We’ll wait, and for pre-eminence contend,
 ‘ Nor seek another wife whom each may wed.’
 // The wise Telemachus replied and said :
 ‘ Eurymachus ! and noble suitors all !
 ‘ No more will I entreat you or address ; 210
 ‘ These things the Gods and all the Greeks know well.
 ‘ But give me a swift ship and twenty men,
 ‘ Who here and there a voyage may perform.
 ‘ To Sparta and to sandy Pylos I
 ‘ Will go, inquiring what I there may learn
 ‘ Of the return of my long absent sire, 215
 ‘ If any man can tell me, or I hear
 ‘ A voice from Jove which brings report to men.
 ‘ If tidings of his life or his return
 ‘ I get, I would, though grieved, remain a year.
 ‘ But if that he is dead nor more in life 220
 ‘ I learn, to my dear country I’ll return,
 ‘ Will build a tomb and pay fit funeral rites,
 ‘ And to a husband will my mother give.’//

He spake and took his seat. To them arose
 Mentor, illustrious Ulysses’ friend, 225
 Who trusted him, when in the ship he went,
 With all his household, that they should obey

The old man's words, and safely guard his goods :
 Who, wishing well to them, harangued and said :

‘ Now listen, Ithacans ! to what I say :

‘ Henceforth let never sceptre-bearing king 230

‘ Strive to be gentle, mild, and well-disposed :

‘ Let him be stern, and cruel deeds commit, .

‘ Since none of those o'er whom he reigned recalls

‘ How kind a sire divine Ulysses was.

‘ Yet to the noble suitors grudge I not 235

‘ To do in folly works of violence :

‘ Risking their own heads, forcibly they eat

‘ Ulysses' goods, nor think he will return.

‘ Yet with the rest I am enraged ; for ye

‘ Sit silently, and check not by your words 240

‘ The suitors few, while ye so many are.’

Leiocritus, Euēnor's son, replied :

‘ What, Mentor ! baneful, foolish, hast thou said,

‘ Urging to check us ? 't would be difficult

‘ E'en for more men to fight with us for food. 245

‘ Should Ithacan Ulysses come himself,

‘ And in his mind desire to drive away

‘ The noble suitors feasting in his house,

‘ His wife, however she may long for him,

‘ Would not rejoice, because to dreadful death, 250

‘ Even with more to help him, he would yield.

‘ What thou hast said is contrary to fate.

‘ But come, ye people ! to your fields disperse.

‘ Mentor and Alitherses will promote

‘ This voyage, his paternal friends of old ;

‘ But he, I ween, in Ithaca will sit 255

‘ And hear reports, but not this voyage make.’

He spake, and quick th' assembly he dissolved,
And to their own abodes they each dispersed :
But to Ulysses' house the suitors went.
To the shore went Telemachus apart, 260
And, in the white sea having washed his hands,
Prayed to Minerva : ' Hear me, Goddess ! thou
' Who to our palace yesterday didst come,
' And badst me sail upon the cloud-streaked sea
' To ask about my absent sire's return ;
' But now the Greeks are baffling all these plans, 265
' And specially the suitors, basely proud.'

He spake in prayer : Minerva near him came,
To Mentor likened, both in form and voice,
And thus addressed him with her winged words :
' Telemachus ! nor base nor senseless thou 270
' Shalt be hereafter : for thy father's force
' Is shed upon thee, and thou shalt be such
' As he was to complete both deed and word.
' Thy journey shall nor vain nor fruitless be.
' If son of him and of Penelope
' Thou wert not, I should never hope that thou 275
' Couldst do the deeds which thou art fain to do.
' Sons of their fathers few the equals are,
' Inferior most, and better very few.
' But since nor base nor foolish thou shalt be,
' And since Ulysses' prudence fails thee not,
' There's hope for thee these deeds to execute. 280
' As to the foolish suitors, let alone
' Their counsel and device : nor wise nor just
' Are they, nor know of death and gloomy fate
' Approaching on the day when all will die.

'Thy wished for voyage shall not be deferred, 285
 'For such hereditary friend I am,
 'Who will equip a ship and go myself.
 'Go to the house, and with the suitors mix :
 'Supplies prepare, in baskets store them all,
 'And wine in jars, and meal, the life of men, 290
 'In well-sewn skins ; and through the district I
 'Will willing friends collect ; and many ships
 'There are in Ithaca, both new and old,
 'And them I will inspect to find the best ;
 'Will quick equip and launch it in the sea.' 295

Thus spoke Minerva, child of Jove, nor long,
 Hearing her voice, Telemachus remained,
 But to the house with grieving heart he went.
 The noble suitors in the halls he found
 Flaying the goats and feasting on fat swine. 300
 Antinous straight laughingly approached
 Telemachus, and took his hand and said :
 // 'Telemachus ! proud speaker ! unrestrained !
 'Let no more evil deeds or words perplex
 'Thy breast, but eat and drink as heretofore. 305
 'The Greeks will all provide a ship and men,
 'That swift to sacred Pylos thou mayst go.
 'To seek for tidings of thy noble sire.'

Prudent Telemachus to him replied :
 'Antinous ! it cannot be that I 310
 'Should feast with you so proud against my will,
 'Nor revel calmly. Is it not enough,
 'Ye suitors ! that ye have consumed my goods,
 'Many and fair, while I was yet a child ?
 'But now that I'm a man, and seek to know

' The thoughts of others, and my mind 's enlarged, 315
 ' Ill fates upon you I will strive to hurl,
 ' To Pylos going or remaining here.
 ' I'll go a passenger, (nor vain shall be
 ' The journey I propose), not of a ship
 ' Nor rowers master, since ye deem it best.' 320

He spake, and quickly from Antinous
 His hand withdrew. The suitors through the house
 Feasted, and taunted him with cutting words ;
 And thus spake one of th' overbearing youths :
 ' Surely Telemachus plots death for us. 325
 ' Either from sandy Pylos he will bring
 ' Allies, or Sparta ; such his eager wish.
 ' Or to the fertile soil of Ephyra
 ' He means to go, and deadly poisons bring,
 ' And put them in the cups and slay us all.' 330

Thus spake another of the haughty youths :
 ' Who knows but in the hollow ships himself,
 ' Far from his friends, he may a wand'rer die,
 ' As died Ulysses ? Yet he would increase,
 ' If so, our toil ; for we must then divide
 ' His goods and houses, and bestow them on 335
 ' His mother, and on him who her may wed.'

They spake : he to his father's chamber went,
 High-roof'd and wide, where heaped-up gold and brass
 Were lying ; vests in boxes ; fragrant oil ;
 And there stood casks of old wine, sweet to drink, 340
 Containing liquor, pure, divine, within,
 Ranged by the wall ; to wait if e'er should come
 Ulysses homeward, suff'ring many woes.
 Close bars were o'er them, fitted skilfully,

Doubly secured. The housekeeper was there 345
 By night and day, and carefully kept watch,
 Euryclēa, sprung from Ops, Peisēnor's son.
 Her, summoning, Telemachus addressed :
 ' Good nurse ! come pour me into jars sweet wine,
 ' Best flavoured next to that which thou dost keep 350
 ' For that ill-fated man, if e'er he comes,
 ' Divine Ulysses, 'scaping death and fate.
 ' Fill twelve, and fit them all with covers close ;
 ' And store up meal for me in well-sewn skins ;
 ' Let there be twenty pecks of mill-ground meal. 355
 ' Be here alone : let all be thoroughly done,
 ' For in the ev'ning I shall take them, when
 ' My mother to her chamber climbs for sleep.
 ' To Sparta and to sandy Pylos I
 ' News of my sire's return will go to seek.' 360

He spake : Euryclēa, his dear nurse, moan'd,
 And weeping answered with these winged words :
 ' Why, dear child ! rises in thy mind this thought ?
 ' Why o'er much country dost thou wish to go,
 ' A dear one left alone ? afar from home 365
 ' Divine Ulysses in a foreign land
 ' Has perished : afterwards, when thou art gone,
 ' They will plan evils for thee, by their craft
 ' To die ; and they will all these things divide.
 ' Stay in thine own house ; thee it ill befits
 ' To stray and suffer on the barren sea.' 370

Prudent Telemachus to her replied :

' Take heart, dear nurse ! (not without God this plan.)
 ' Swear not to tell it to my mother dear,
 ' Till the eleventh or twelfth day shall come,

‘ Unless she pines for me, or learns my flight; *Cave for mother* 375
 ‘ Lest her fair skin she injure by her tears.’

He spake: the old dame sware God’s mighty oath.
 When she had sworn and made the oath complete,
 Into the jars forthwith she drew the wine,
 And stored the meal up in the well-sewn skins. 380
 Then with the suitors sat Telemachus.

Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts.
 Like to Telemachus, throughout the town
 She went and, standing by, each man addressed,
 And bade them meet at evening near the ship. 385

Then of Noëmon, Phronius’ noble son,
 She asked a ship, which willingly he gave.
 The sun was setting, and the streets were dark,
 When to the sea the swift ship down she drew,
 Put tackle in, which well-benched vessels bear, 390
 And at the port’s mouth moored it: the good crew
 Collected thick, for each the Goddess urged.

Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts.
 She hasted to divine Ulysses’ house,
 And drowsiness upon the suitors poured; 395
 Confused them drinking; from their hands struck down
 Their cups. They hasted to the town to sleep,
 Nor longer sate, for sleep fell on their eyes.

Minerva then Telemachus addressed,
 And from the well-built palace called him forth, 400
 In guise of Mentor, both in form and voice:
 ‘ Telemachus! e’en now thy well-greaved friends
 ‘ Sit at their oars and wait for thy approach.
 ‘ Come! let us go, nor linger on the road.’

Pallas Minerva spake and led the way 405

With speed, and in the Goddess' steps he went.
When to the ship and to the sea they came,
They found his long-haired crew upon the shore ;
And of Telemachus the sacred force
Addressed them thus : ' Come friends ! and let us bring
' The stores, for all are ready in the house ; 410
' Nor have my mother or the servants heard
' Of this : one only has my purpose learned.'

He spake, and led the way : they followed him,
Bringing the stores, which in the well-benched ship,
As had desired Ulysses' son, they placed. 415
Telemachus embarked, Minerva led,
And in the stern sate down ; and near her sate
Telemachus, and they the stern-ropes loosed,
And by the rowing-benches went and sate.
Blue-eyed Minerva sent a fav'ring gale, 420
Fair Zephyr, sounding o'er the purple sea.
Telemachus urged on the crew, and bade
The tackling fix ; he urged and they obeyed.
The fir-wood mast they raised and fixed within
The hollow socket, and made fast with ropes, 425
And drew the white sails up with well-twined thongs.
The wind the main-sail filled ; the purple wave
On the keel sounded as the ship sped on
And through the wave ran, hasting on its way.
When they had lashed the tackling on the ship, 430
They held up goblets brimming o'er with wine,
And to th' immortal, everlasting Gods
Libation made, and, chiefest of them all,
To her, the blue-eyed child of Jove. The ship
Through night and early dawn pursued its way.

BOOK III.

LEAVING the beauteous sea, up-rose the sun
 Into the brazen sky, to light the Gods,
 And mortal men upon the fertile earth.
 To Pylos, Neleus' well-built town, they came.
 They on the shore were off'ring sacrifice, 5
 Black bulls to Neptune, shaker of the earth.
 There were nine seats : on each five hundred sate,
 And held in front of each of them nine bulls.
 The entrails they had tasted, burnt the thighs
 To God, when these were landing. In the ship
 They furled the sails, drew up, and disembarked. 10
 Telemachus came forth : Minerva led,
 And him the blue-eyed Goddess first addressed :
 ' Telemachus ! no cause of slightest shame
 ' To thee who o'er the sea hast sailed to hear . 15
 ' What land conceals thy sire, what fate he met.
 ' Go straight to Nestor, tamer of the horse,
 ' To know what counsel in his breast he hides,
 ' [And pray that he will tell thee all the truth,
 ' He will no falsehood tell for he is wise.]' 20
 Prudent Telemachus to her replied ;
 ' How, Mentor ! can I go ? how him address ?
 ' I am not skilled in use of artful words.
 ' It shames a young to ask an older man.'
 Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, spake again : 25
 ' Telemachus ! some thoughts thyself wilt have,
 ' And God will furnish others : for I deem
 ' Thou hast been born and bred with fav'ring Gods.'

Pallas Minerva spoke and led the way,
While quickly he the Goddess' steps pursued. 30
Th'assembled Pylians and their seats they reached,
Where with his sons sate Nestor and his friends,
Spitting and roasting flesh to form the feast.

All came in crowds when they the strangers saw,
Saluted with their hands and bade them sit. 35

Pisistratus, the son of Nestor, first
Came near, took hands of both, and at the feast

On the sand seated them on fleeces soft,
By Thrasymede his brother, and his sire ;
Gave of the entrails part, and poured out wine 40
In cup of gold, and, pledging, thus addressed
Minerva, child of ægis-bearing Jove :

' Guest ! to king Neptune offer up a prayer,
' For coming hither in his feast ye share.

' When thou libation and due prayer hast made, 45
' Then give to him the cup of honeyed wine

' To make libation ; for I deem that he
' Will to th'immortals pray ; all need the Gods.

' The younger he ; his age is like mine own ;
' So to thee first I give the golden cup.' 50

The cup of sweet wine in her hand he placed :
Minerva joyed in one so wise and just,

Because to her the first he gave the cup
Of gold ; and then she thus to Neptune prayed :

' Hear, Neptune ! thou surrounder of the earth ! 55
' Nor grudge to ratify the prayer we make.

' First glory give to Nestor and his sons ;
' Then next to all the other Pylians grant

' Gracious return for this famed hecatomb.

‘Grant that Telemachus and I may home,
 ‘In our black ship, our object gained, return.’ 60

When she had prayed and finished all the rites,
 She gave Telemachus the beauteous cup ;
 And in like words Ulysses’ dear son prayed.
 When they the flesh had roasted and drawn off, 65
 Dividing shares they ate the noble feast.
 When they with meat and drink were satisfied,
 Nestor, Gerenian horseman, them addressed :

‘Now is the fitter time to seek and ask
 ‘Of guests, when pleased with feasting, who they are. 70
 ‘Who are ye, guests ? whence come ye o’er the waves ?
 ‘Come ye for traffic, or mere rovers ye,
 ‘As pirates wand’ring o’er the sea, who risk
 ‘Their own lives, bringing ill to foreigners ?’

Prudent Telemachus thus spoke again, 75
 Courageous, for Minerva in his mind
 Put courage, that about his absent sire
 He should inquire [and gain renown from men].
 ‘Nestor Neleides ! glory of the Greeks !
 ‘Thou askest whence we are, and I will tell. 80
 ‘From Ithaca, beneath mount Neïum,
 ‘We come ; our object is not popular,
 ‘But it is private, as I will relate.
 ‘I come to seek, if I perchance may hear,
 ‘News of the wide-spread glory of my sire,
 ‘Patient, divine Ulysses ; who, they say,
 ‘Fighting with thee destroyed the Trojan town. 85
 ‘Of all the rest who ’gainst the Trojans fought
 ‘We hear where each by mournful fate has died.
 ‘But Saturn’s son has made his death unheard,

' For none can clearly tell me where he died ;
 ' Whether on land by hostile men destroyed, 90
 ' Or in the sea 'mid Amphitrite's waves.
 ' So to thy knees I come, a suppliant,
 ' If thou canst tell me of his mournful death ;
 ' Hast seen it with thine eyes, or heard report
 ' Of where he wanders : him his mother bare 95
 ' Most wretched. (Do not from regard to me,
 ' Nor from compassion, tell me honeyed words,
 ' But tell me true, as thou hast found report.) *Truths*
 ' I pray, if e'er Ulysses, my good sire, *Courage*
 ' Has helped thee to accomplish word or deed
 ' In Troy, where ye Achæans suffered woes, 100
 ' These for my sake recall and tell me true.'

Nestor, Gerenian horseman, answered him :
 ' O friend ! thou callest to my mind the grief
 ' Which we, resistless sons of Greece, endured,
 ' Either in ships upon the cloudy sea, 105
 ' Wand'ring for plunder where Achilles led,
 ' Or when we fought round Priam's mighty town,
 ' Where many of our chiefest men were slain.
 ' There warlike Ajax, there Achilles lies ;
 ' Patroclus there, an equal of the Gods 110
 ' In counsel ; there my dear son, blameless, brave,
 ' Antilochus, swift runner, warrior.
 ' And many other evils we endured :
 ' But who of mortals could narrate them all ?
 ' Not if for five years thou shouldst stay or six, 115
 ' And ask what evils there the Greeks endured ;
 ' For wearied with the tale thou home wouldst go.
 ' Nine years we were with varied craft employed,

‘ And evils planned, which scarcely Jove at last
‘ Performed. There no one ventured to compare 120
‘ With him in council ; for in varied craft
‘ God-like Ulysses far surpassed them all,
‘ Thy sire, if really thou his offspring art.
‘ I wonder as I gaze : so much thy words
‘ Resemble his ; and no one would suppose
‘ So young a man so suitably would speak. 125
‘ I and divine Ulysses, all that while,
‘ Nor in assembly nor in council spake
‘ Diversely, but, unanimous in thought
‘ And plan, devised the best things for the Greeks.
‘ When Priam’s lofty city we had sacked, 130
‘ [We sailed away, and God dispersed the Greeks.]
‘ Then for the Greeks Jove planned a sad return,
‘ Because not all of them were wise and just,
‘ And many of them fell by evil fate,
‘ Caused by the blue-eyed goddess, child of Jove, 135
‘ Who ’tween the two Atridæ raised a strife.
‘ They to th’ assembly summoned all the Greeks,
‘ Reckless, disorderly, till set of sun,
‘ (For the Greeks came to it weighed down by wine)
‘ And told the reason why they summoned them. 140
‘ Then Menelaus ordered all the Greeks
‘ To plan return upon the broad sea’s back.
‘ This pleased not Agamemnon ; he desired
‘ To stay the host, give sacred hecatombs,
‘ And so Minerva’s dreadful wrath appease : 145
‘ Unwise ! nor knowing she would not relent ;
‘ Slow turns the mind of the immortal gods.
‘ Thus stood the two, exchanging angry words.

- ‘ With dreadful shout the well-greaved Greeks arose,
‘ And diff’rent were the plans which pleased their
 minds. 150
- ‘ At night we rested, meditating thoughts
‘ Ungentle : Jove was planning baneful fate.
‘ At dawn we some launched ships into the sea,
‘ Embarking goods, and women deeply-zoned ;
‘ But half the host remained, and would not leave 155
‘ Atrides Agamemnon, king of men :
‘ And we, the other half, embarked and rowed :
‘ And very quickly sailed the ships, while God
‘ Had tranquillised the great gulf of the sea.
‘ At Tenedos we offered to the Gods
‘ Victims, as homeward bound ; but our return 160
‘ Jove, unrelenting, had not purposed yet,
‘ And evil strife a second time stirred up.
‘ Ulysses, warlike, prudent, with his friends
‘ Back from the voyage turned their well-oared ships,
‘ Siding with Agamemnon, Atreus’ son.
‘ I, with the ships that followed closely, fled, 165
‘ Knowing the ills the Gods designed ; and fled
‘ Tydeus’ brave son, and his companions urged.
‘ Late after us fair Menelaus came,
‘ And reached at Lesbos : we a long course planned,
‘ Either above rough Chios to return 170
‘ By Psyria’s isle and keep it to the left,
‘ Or under Chios by high Mimas’ hill.
‘ We prayed the God to shew a sign ; and he
‘ Shewed it, and bade us to Eubœa’s isle
‘ Cleave the mid sea, and sorrow so escape. 175
‘ Fair rushed the breeze that blew ; the ships with speed

- ‘ Ran o’er the fishy ways, and reached at night
 ‘ Geræstum : there to Neptune many thighs
 ‘ Of bulls we gave, for we had passed much sea.
 ‘ It was the fourth day when their equal ships 180
 ‘ The crew of Diomede, of Tydeus son,
 ‘ The tamer of the horse, in Argos moored.
 ‘ But I for Pylos sailed, nor failed the breeze
 ‘ Since first the God had sent it forth to blow.
 ‘ Thus without news, dear child ! I came, nor knew
 ‘ Who of the Argives were preserved, who died. 185
 ‘ But what, while sitting in my house, I hear
 ‘ Thou shalt know truly, nor will I conceal.
 ‘ They say the warlike Myrmidons came safe,
 ‘ Whom the famed son of brave Achilles led ;
 ‘ Safe Philoctetes, Pæan’s noble son. 190
 ‘ Idomeneus brought all his friends to Crete,
 ‘ Who ’scaped the war, nor one the sea destroyed.
 ‘ Of Atreus’ son ye, though remote, have heard,
 ‘ Both how he came, and how Ægisthus planned
 ‘ His death, for which he shamefully has paid. 195
 ‘ How good it is that, when a man is dead,
 ‘ His son survives ; he vengeance wreaked upon
 ‘ Ægisthus, murd’rer of his noble sire.
 ‘ [And thou, dear youth ! whom fair and strong I see,
 ‘ Be brave, that future men may speak of thee.]’ 200
 Prudent Telemachus to him replied :
 ‘ Nestor Neleides ! glory of the Greeks !
 ‘ Well he avenged his father ; and the Greeks
 ‘ Will spread his name for future men to hear.
 ‘ O that to me such power the Gods would grant, 205
 ‘ To pay the suitors for their grievous pride,

‘ Who insolent against me plan foul deeds !
‘ But not for me such bliss the Gods have planned,
‘ For sire nor me ; but we must bear our fate.’

Gerenian horseman, Nestor, answered him : 210

‘ My friend ! these things thou callest to my mind.
‘ They say that many suitors in thine halls,
‘ Wooing thy mother in despite of thee,
‘ Plot evils. Tell me if thou willingly
‘ Submitt’st thyself, or if th’ inhabitants
‘ Are hostile, and obey God’s oracle. 215
‘ Who knows but he their insults may repay,
‘ Either alone or joined by all the Greeks ?
‘ If blue-eyed Pallas would but be thy friend,
‘ As when of famed Ulysses she took care
‘ In Troy, where many woes we Greeks endured, 220
‘ (For never saw I Gods so plainly show
‘ Their love as when Minerva by him stood.)
‘ If she would thus befriend thee and regard,
‘ Soon each of them the marriage would forget.’

Prudent Telemachus to him replied : 225

‘ Old man ! thy word, I think, will not be done ;
‘ For thou hast said too much, to my surprise ;
‘ This, though the Gods might will, I could not hope.’

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered him :

‘ Telemachus ! what word has now escaped 230
‘ Thy lips ? a God who wills it can with ease
‘ Protect a man, though distant he may be.
‘ However I might toil, I rather would
‘ Go to my country, and have safe return,
‘ Than die at home, as Agamemnon died
‘ By treach’ry of Ægisthus and his wife. 235

‘ Yet not the Gods themselves can ward off death,
‘ That comes to all, e’en from a man they love, *weally*
‘ When comes the hard fate of long-sleeping death.’

Prudent Telemachus to her replied :

'Mentor! though anxious let us not discuss

‘ These things ; for his return is not assured,

' But the Gods for him death and black fate plan.

‘ Another word of Nestor I would ask,

‘ For he in sense and justice all excels.

'Three generations he has ruled, they say,

‘ And, as he strikes my mind, immortal seems.

' O Nestor ! son of Neleus ! tell me truth,

‘ How Agamemnon, son of Atreus, died ;

‘And where was Menelaus? what the death

‘ Which crafty-counselling Ægisthus planned,

'And slew a man much braver than himself? 250

‘ In Grecian Argos was he not ? where else

‘A wanderer, when him he dared to slay?’

To him Gerenian horseman, Nestor, said :

‘ Well then, my child ! I’ll tell thee all the truth.

'How 'twould have happed thou rightly dost sur-
mise

' If Menelaus, coming back from Troy, *El. Myths*

‘ Had found Ægisthus living in the house.

'Not o'er him dead would men have heaped the earth,

‘ But dogs and birds would have his flesh devoured,

' On the plain lying, from the city far. 260

'Not one Achæan matron would have mourned

‘For him, who plotted this enormous deed.

' While there we sate and many toils endured,

‘He, in a nook of Argos, at his ease,

‘ Wretched Agamemnon’s wife with many words.
‘ The noble Clytemnestra spurned at first 265
‘ Th’ unworthy offer, for her mind was good.
‘ Now near her was a man of song, to whom
‘ Atrides, when he went to Troy, had giv’n
‘ The strictest charge to keep watch o’er his wife.
‘ When fate divine had chained him to his death,
‘ He to a desert isle the bard conveyed, 270
‘ And left him there, a spoil and prey for birds ;
‘ And willing took her willing to his home.
‘ There many thighs of beeves he sacrificed
‘ Upon the sacred altars of the Gods,
‘ And hung up offerings, both vests and gold,
‘ The great deed done he scarce had hoped to do. 275
‘ We sailed together as we came from Troy,
‘ I and Atrides, each to each a friend.
‘ To sacred Sunium, th’ Athenian cape,
‘ We came, and Phœbus with his sudden darts
‘ The pilot slew of Menelaus’ ship, 280
‘ Holding the rudder as the ship ran on,
‘ Phrontis, Onētor’s son, who far surpassed
‘ The tribes of men in steering, when the storms
‘ Come rushing on ; and there he was detained,
‘ Though hasting on his voyage, till his friend
‘ He buried, and performed funereal rites. 285
‘ But when he, going o’er the darksome sea,
‘ In hollow ships, to Malea’s mount had run,
‘ Far-sounding Jove a mournful journey planned,
‘ And on him poured a blast of roaring winds,
‘ And monstrous swelling waves, as mountains high. 290
‘ There he dispersed them, and drove some to Crete,

‘ Where round Iardan’s streams Cydonians dwell.
‘ There a bare steep rock runs into the sea,
‘ A cape of Gortys in the gloomy deep.
‘ The south wind there a mighty wave impels 295
‘ Against the left-hand crag on Phæstus’ shore,
‘ And a small rock the mighty wave restrains.
‘ Thither they came ; the men scarce death escaped,
‘ While the waves wrecked the ships upon the rocks.
‘ But yet five dark-prowed ships the winds and sea 300
‘ Bore off, and drove them on th’ Egyptian shore.
‘ Collecting there much property and gold,
‘ He wandered with his ships to strange-tongued men.
‘ Meanwhile Ægisthus planned sad deeds at home,
‘ Atrides slew, and o’er his people reigned.
‘ Seven years he ruled Mycēne rich in gold : 305
‘ In the eighth year divine Orestes came,
‘ A woe to him, from Athens, and destroyed
‘ Ægisthus, who his noble father slew ;
‘ And, having slain him, to the Argives made,
‘ For his detested mother and for him, 310
‘ Feeble Ægisthus, a funereal feast.
‘ On that same day brave Menelaus came,
‘ Loaded with riches, which his ships conveyed.
‘ And thou, friend ! do not wander far from home,
‘ Leaving within thine house thy goods, and men
‘ So proud : lest they divide them and devour, 315
‘ And thou have made a voyage all in vain.
‘ But I exhort and order thee to go
‘ To Menelaus, who has lately come
‘ From men from whom he never hoped to come,
‘ When first the tempests drove him from his course 320

' Into a sea so vast ; whence emigrate
 ' No yearly birds ; so great and fierce it is.
 ' Go with thy ship and friends, or, if thou wilt,
 ' Journey by land : a chariot and steeds
 ' Await thee, and my sons shall be thy guides 325
 ' To Sparta, where fair Menelaus dwells.
 ' Entreat him that he tell thee all the truth :
 ' He will no falsehood tell for he is wise.'
 He spake : the sun went down and darkness came ;
 Blue-eyed Minerva then addressed him thus : 330
 ' Thou, venerable man ! hast spoken well.
 ' Now cut the victims' tongues, and mingle wine,
 ' That we, to Neptune and the other Gods
 ' Having libation made, may seek repose,
 ' For 'tis the hour : the sun beneath the west 335
 ' Is now departed ; 'tis not meet to sit
 ' At the Gods' feast too long, but to retire.'

So spake Jove's daughter ; they obeyed her voice.
 Upon their hands the heralds water pour'd ;
 The young men crowned the goblets with the wine,
 And gave to each the cups in order due. 340
 They burned the tongues, and rising poured out wine.
 When they had made libation, and had drunk
 All that their mind desired, Telemachus
 And Pallas to their ship made haste to go.
 But Nestor touched and checked him with these words :
 ' May Jove and all th' immortal Gods forbid 345
 ' That from my house you to your ships should go,
 ' As from one destitute of clothes, and poor ;
 ' Who has nor vests nor carpets in his house
 ' Whereon or he or guests may softly sleep ! 350

‘ But I have many vests and carpets fair.
‘ Not of that man Ulysses shall the son
‘ On ship-board sleep forsooth while I’m alive,
‘ Nor when sons after me are left at home
‘ To welcome guests who at my house arrive.’ 355

Blue-eyed Minerva answered him again :

‘ Well hast thou spoken, dear old man ! ’tis fit
‘ Telemachus obey, and better thus :
‘ And he shall follow to thine house to sleep.
‘ But to the black ship I myself will go, 360
‘ To cheer our friends there, and to tell them all.
‘ I only with them have authority :
‘ The others, younger, follow but from love,
‘ All of such age as brave Telemachus.
‘ In the black hollow ship I now would sleep : 365
‘ But to the brave Cauconians I at dawn
‘ Must go ; for there a debt is due to me,
‘ Nor new nor small. But him who to thine house
‘ Has come, with chariot and with thy sons
‘ Send on the road ; and give him horses too
‘ That run the quickest and are best in strength.’ 370

Thus speaking, blue-eyed Pallas went away,
Like a sea-eagle. Wonder seized them all.

The old man, when he saw it, was amazed,
Took by the hand Telemachus and said :

‘ Dear youth ! I could not think thee base or mean, 375
‘ When one so young attendant Gods conduct.
‘ None of the Gods who have Olympian homes
‘ Is this but Jupiter’s most glorious child,
‘ Tritogeneia, who on thy good sire
‘ Honour among the men of Greece bestowed.

‘ Be thou, O queen ! propitious ; grant renown 380
‘ To me, my children, and my virtuous wife.
‘ A year-old heifer, with a forehead broad,
‘ Untamed, which none have led beneath the yoke,
‘ To thee I’ll give, and plate its horns with gold.’

He spake : Minerva hearkened to his prayer. 385
Then the Gerenian horseman, Nestor, led
His sons and daughters’ husbands to his house.
When to the palace of the king they came,
They sate in order on their seats and thrones.
And when they came, the old man mixed a bowl 390
Of luscious wine which, in th’ eleventh year,
The house-keeper unsealed and loosed the band.
The bowl the old man mingled, and besought
Minerva, child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Making libation and with many prayers.
When they had made libation, and had drunk 395
All that their mind desired, they sought repose,
Each in his own abode. But Nestor made
Telemachus, Ulysses’ son, to sleep
On a wrought couch, beneath the sounding porch,
And near him prince Pisistratus, renowned 400
As spearman, who alone unmarried was
Of all his sons, within the house. Himself
Slept in an inner chamber of the hall,
And there his royal wife adorned his couch.
When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
Quick from his couch Gerenian Nestor sprang, 405
And, coming forth, on polished marble sate ;
A seat that was before the lofty doors,
White, polished well with oil, where sate of yore

Neleus, in counsel equal to the Gods :
 To Hades he, by fate subdued, had gone ; 410
 Gerenian Nestor, guardian of the Greeks,
 Then sate there, with a sceptre in his hand ;
 And round him were assembled close his sons,
 Forth coming : Echēphron and Stratius,
 Perseus, Arētus, godlike Thrasymede,
 And to them came the sixth, Pisistratus. 415
 They led and seated there Telemachus.

Them the Gerenian Nestor thus addressed :
 ‘ Dear children ! quickly execute my wish,
 ‘ That of the Gods I may Minerva first
 ‘ Propitiate, who clearly to my sight 420
 ‘ Came to the Gods’ feast. Let one to the field
 ‘ Go, that the herdsman drive the oxen up ; *to send*
 ‘ One to the ship of brave Telemachus,
 ‘ And hither bring his friends, and leave but two.
 ‘ Goldsmith Laerces let another bid 425
 ‘ To come, and plate a heifer’s horns with gold.
 ‘ Stay here the rest of you ; and tell the maids
 ‘ Within the house to labour at a feast.
 ‘ Bring seats, and wood, and water shining clear.’

He spake : all quick obey’d ; the heifer came 430
 Forth from the field ; and from the equal ship
 Came the companions of Telemachus.
 The goldsmith came, and in his hands he bore
 His implements, resources of his art ;
 Anvil and hammers, pincers wrought with skill,
 Wherewith he worked the gold. Minerva came 435
 To share the sacrifice. Old Nestor gave
 The gold, which he beat out and fixed around

Its horns, that she might see it and rejoice.
Then Statius and god-like Echephron
Led forth the heifer by the horns. To them
Arētus from the chamber brought a vase 440
Placed in an urn bedecked with flowers ; and held
Cakes in a basket with the other hand.
And valiant Thrasymedes came, and brought
A sharpened axe to strike the heifer down :
And Perseus held a bowl. Old Nestor took
Religiously the vase and cakes, and prayed 445
Much to Minerva, as he led the rites :
Then from the victim's head he burnt the hairs.
When they had prayed and raised the barley cakes,
Then Thrasymedes, Nestor's valiant son,
Rushed up. The axe the tendons of the neck
Severed, and took the heifer's strength away. 450
Daughters, and sons' wives, and Eurydice,
Of Clymenus the eldest daughter, wife
Of Nestor, all up-raised a joyous cry.
The brothers raised it from the wide-spread ground,
And prince Pisistratus the heifer slew.
Forth gushed the black blood, and life left the bones.
Then they dismembered it, cut off the thighs, 455
All in due order ; covered them with fat
In double folds, and placed raw meat thereon.
The old man roasted it with logs, and poured
Bright wine thereon : the young men standing by 460
Held in their hands the spits with five sharp prongs.
But when the thighs were burnt the inward parts
They tasted, and cut off the rest, and placed
On spits, and roasted, turning with their hands.

Then Polycastè bathed Telemachus,
Of Nelian Nestor youngest daughter fair.
When she had bathed him, and with olive oil
Anointed, she around him threw a vest
And tunic. From the bath, in form a god,
He went, and sate by Nestor, king of men.
When they the flesh had roasted and drawn off, 470
They feasting sate ; and young men quickly came,
And poured the wine forth into cups of gold.
When they were satisfied with drink and food,
Nestor, Gerenian horseman, them addressed :
' My sons ! go bring Telemachus the steeds 475
' With shining coats, and yoke them to the car,
' Ready to go.' He spake, and they obeyed,
And to the car the swift steeds quickly yoked.
Therein the house-keeper placed bread and wine,
And viands such as Jove-born kings consume. 480
Telemachus the beauteous chariot climbed,
And Nestor's princely son, Pisistratus,
Mounted the chariot and assumed the reins,
Whipped on the steeds, which, not unwilling, flew
Across the plain, and lofty Pylos left, 485
And shook all day the neck-encircling yoke.
The sun had set, and all the ways were dark.
They Pheræ reached, the house of Diocles,
Son of Orsilochus, Alpheius' son.
They rested ; hospitality he gave. 490
When early rosy-fingered dawn appeared,
They yoked the horses, mounted on the car,
And from the sounding portico they drove.
[He whipped the steeds, which not unwilling flew.]

They went along the fertile plain, and soon
 Were near their journey's end : so fast
 The rapid horses bore them on their way.
 The sun had set, and all the ways were dark.

495

B O O K I V.

To LACEDÆMON, full of deep ravines,
 They drove, where famous Menelaus dwelt.
 They found him at a marriage festival.
 (Given to many friends and neighbours there)
 Of son and blameless daughter in his house.
 Her he was sending to Achilles' son, 5
 For he had promised and by vow confirmed
 At Troy, that he would give her ; and the Gods
 Accomplished the espousals ; so that he
 Was sending her, with chariots and steeds,
 To the famed city of the Myrmidons,
 O'er whom he reigned. But for his son he brought 10
 Alektor's daughter from the Spartan land.
 He, Megapenthes, of a slave was born,
 Dearly beloved, because the Gods denied
 Offspring to Helen, since she first produced
 Hermione, that lovely child ; whose form
 Resembled that which golden Venus had.
 [Thus, in the spacious house with lofty roof, 15
 Neighbours and friends of Menelaus held
 A feast, delighted ; and among them played
 A god-like harpist, while two dancers whirled

Amid them, when the bard his strain began.]

They and the horses at the portal stood, 20

Telemachus and Nestor's noble son.

Them Eteōneus coming forward saw,

(Of Menelaus active servant he),

And went to tell the tidings to the king,

And, standing near him, spoke these winged words : 25

'Two strangers, noble Menelaus ! here

'Are standing, like the race of mighty Jove.

'Tell me if I their horses shall unyoke,

'Or bid them other entertainer seek.'

Fair Menelaus angrily replied : 30

'O Eteōneus, of Boēthes son !

'Thou wert not foolish once, but now thou speak'st,

'As though a child thou wert, these foolish words.

'We two have hither come, consuming oft

'The hospitable gifts of other men,

'Hoping that Jove would free us from our cares. 35

'Go, loose their steeds, and bring them in to feast !'

He spake : the servant hastened from the house,
And bade the rest to follow in his steps.

They loosed the sweating horses from the yoke,

And to the stable-mangers tied them fast. 40

Before them rye they placed and barley white,

And reared the car against the shining front,

And led the men the noble house within.

They, when the palace of the Jove-born king

They saw, were filled with wonder ; for a beam

As of the sun or moon appeared to shine 45

In noble Menelaus' high-roofed house.

When they had gratified their wondering eyes,

They to the polished cauldrons went, and bathed.
 Them when the maids had bathed and rubbed with oil
 They clothed with vests and tunics of crisp wool, 50
 And placed on thrones where Menelaus sate.

From a fair golden ewer a maiden filled
 A bowl, above a silver cauldron placed,
 To wash, and spread a polished table near.
 A venerable house-keeper brought bread, 55
 Piling up divers cates in full supply.

[Dishes of various meats the carver brought,
 And by their side the golden cups arranged.]

Fair Menelaus pledged them both and said:

{ 'Feast on, and welcome be! and, when ye cease 60

' From feasting, we will ask you who ye are, ✓

' Your parents' race has not been lost in you.

' From mighty kings that wield the sceptre ye

' Are sprung; mean parents could not such beget.'

He spake, and in their hands he placed the chine 65
 Of a fat ox, the portion set for him;

And on the feast prepared their hands they threw.

When they were satisfied with drink and meat,

Telemachus thus spake to Nestor's son,

Holding his head nigh lest the rest should hear: 70

' Mark, son of Nestor, pleasant to my soul!

' The gleam of brass within the sounding house,

' Of gold and amber, silver, ivory.

' Such must the hall be of Olympian Jove;

' Such wealth untold; I wonder as I gaze.' 75

Fair Menelaus understood his speech,

And thus addressed them with his winged words:

' Dear youths! no mortal could with Jove contend: }

‘Immortal are his houses and his goods.
‘Some one of men perhaps will vie with me 80
‘In wealth, some not ; for, after many woes
‘And wanderings, I brought it in my ships ;
‘And in the eighth year came, a wand’rer o’er
‘Cyprus, Phœnice, to th’ Egyptian men,
‘The Æthiopians, Sidonians,
‘Th’ Erembi, Libya, where the lambs are born 85
‘With horns, and thrice a year the ewes bring forth.
‘There neither king nor shepherd is in want
‘Of cheese and flesh, nor of the pleasant milk ;
‘They always store the yearly milk away.
‘While in those realms I strayed, collecting wealth, 90
‘One slew my brother secretly, beyond
‘All thought, through craft of his pernicious wife :
‘Thus without joy o’er all this wealth I rule.
‘You from your sires, whoe’er they be, would learn
‘What ills I underwent, and lost my home 95
‘Well-peopled, and with many riches stored.
‘O that I dwelt here, having but a third
‘Of all this wealth, and that the men were safe
‘Who died at Troy, from fertile Argos far !
‘Although lamenting and bewailing all, 100
‘Yet oft, within my palace as I sit,
‘Sometimes I ease my mind by tears, sometimes
‘Refrain ; cold sorrow soon has wailed enough.
‘I do not grieve and weep so much for all
‘As for one man, who takes away my sleep 105
‘And appetite, when I remember him ;
‘For no one of the Greeks has toiled and borne
‘What he, Ulysses, toiled and underwent.

‘ Care was to him assigned, and grief to me
 ‘ Unceasingly, for he is absent long ;
 ‘ Nor know we whether he’s alive or dead. 110
 ‘ Aged Laertes, wise Penelope,
 ‘ And, whom he left at home but lately born,
 ‘ Telemachus, bewail him in his house.’

He spake, and roused his sorrow for his sire :
 He from his eye-lids shed upon the ground
 A tear-drop, when he heard his father’s name.
 He held the purple cloak before his eyes 115
 With both his hands. Him Menelaus marked,
 And meditated in his heart and mind
 Whether to leave him thinking on his sire,
 Or first inquire what might his purpose be.
 While thus he doubted in his heart and mind, 120
 From her high fragrant chamber Helen came,
 Like to Diana who the distaff bears. *Clear myt.*
 Adraste for her placed a well-made couch,
 A carpet of soft wool Alcippe bore ;
 Phylo a silver basket, which to her 125
 Alcandra, wife of Polybus, had given,
 Who dwelt at Thebes in the Egyptian land,
 Where many treasures in his house are laid.
 To Menelaus he two silver baths,
 Two tripods, and ten golden talents gave.
 His wife besides to Helen gave fair gifts, 130
 A golden distaff, and a basket round
 Of silver, finished off with lips of gold.
 The maiden Phylo brought and set it down,
 Filled to the brim with fine-drawn threads, whereon
 Was fixed the distaff, bearing dark-hued wool. 135

She sate upon the couch, a stool beneath
Her feet, and of her husband thus inquired :

‘ O noble Menelaus ! know we yet
‘ Who these men are who to our house have come ?
‘ Are my words true or false ? my mind compels 140
‘ My speech ; for never saw I one so like,
‘ Woman or man (I wonder as I gaze),
‘ As this one seems to brave Ulysses’ son,
‘ Telemachus, whom, lately-born, he left
‘ At home, when for the sake of shameless me 145
‘ Ye Grecians, fierce war planning, went to Troy.’

Fair Menelaus answered her and said :

‘ My wife ! as thou surmisest so think I.
‘ Such are his feet as his, and such his hands,
‘ Glance of his eyes, his head and hair above. 150
‘ When now, Ulysses calling to my mind,
‘ I spoke of woes which he for me endured,
‘ He from his eye-lids shed a bitter tear,
‘ And held his purple cloak before his eyes.’

Pisistratus, the son of Nestor, said : 155

‘ O godlike Menelaus ! Atreus’ son !
‘ Prince of the people ! truly, as thou say’st,
‘ Of that man he is son ; but still he is
‘ Modest, and is reluctant in his mind
‘ To introduce his overtures to thee, 160
‘ With whose voice, as a God’s, we both are charmed.
‘ Me the Gerenian horseman, Nestor, sent
‘ As escort on his journey ; for he wished
‘ To see thee, if perchance thou couldst suggest
‘ Aught or of word or deed ; for many griefs
‘ For his long-absent sire the boy endures

‘ At home ; to whom no other aids remain, 165
 ‘ Since now Telemachus is gone, and none
 ‘ Are in the realm who can his wrongs redress,’

Fair Menelaus answered him and said :

‘ O wonderful ! the son of my dear friend
 ‘ Has at my house arrived, who for my sake 170
 ‘ Has many labours borne. / I said I would
 ‘ Above all other Argives show him love,
 ‘ If to us two loud-sounding Jove should grant
 ‘ In our swift ships return upon the sea ;
 ‘ A city would assign him ; build a house ; 175
 ‘ From Ithaca would bring him with his goods,
 ‘ His son and subjects ; would depopulate
 ‘ One neighb’ring town of those beneath my sway ;
 ‘ And we would be united ; nor would aught
 ‘ Dissever us in friendship and in joy,
 ‘ Till death’s black cloud should overshadow both. 180
 ‘ But God himself has envied this to us,
 ‘ Who made him wretched and without return.’

He spake, and roused in all regretful tears.

The Jove-descended Argive Helen wept ;
 Telemachus and Menelaus wept, 185
 Nor even Nestor’s son had tearless eyes ;
 For he remembered brave Antilochus,
 Whom bright Aurora’s noble offspring slew.
 Rememb’ring him he spoke these winged words :
 ‘ Atrides ! aged Nestor used to say 190
 ‘ [When in our house each with the other spoke]
 ‘ That thou above all other men art wise.
 ‘ Now, if it may be, hear me. (’Tis no joy
 ‘ To weep at feasts ! the early dawn will come.)

' Yet I am not ashamed to weep for one 195
 ' Who may have died and yielded unto fate.
 ' And 'tis the privilege of men in grief
 ' To cut the hair and dew the cheek with tears.
 ' My brother too, of Argives not the worst,
 ' Is dead : thou must have known him well, but I 200
 ' Nor knew nor saw him ; but Antilochus, *cl-m.*
 ' As they report, all other men excelled
 ' As a swift runner and a warrior.'

Fair Menelaus answered him and said :

' Friend ! thou hast spoken as a brave man ought
 ' To speak and act, an elder of his race 205
 ' And of such sire ; wise therefore are thy words.
 ' Soon is his son discerned to whom, at birth
 ' And marriage, Jove prosperity decreed.
 ' So he has granted Nestor to grow old
 ' In happiness unceasingly at home ; 210
 ' And that his sons be wise and warriors brave.
 ' But let us check the tears which lately rose,
 ' And think upon the feast. Upon our hands
 ' Let them pour water : when the day shall dawn
 ' Telemachus and I will converse hold.' 215

He spake : upon their hands Asphalion,
 Servant of Menelaus, water poured,
 And on the feast prepared their hands they placed.
 Then Helen, sprung from Jove, had other thoughts.
 Into the cup of wine from whence they drank 220
 She put a drug which care and anger soothes,
 Bringing forgetfulness of all distress
 To him who drinks it mingled in the bowl.
 Nor would he all day long one tear let fall

*Put aside
and fe*

If father and if mother both were dead,
Or if they killed his brother or dear son 225
Before him, and he saw it with his eyes.
Such drugs, with skill prepared, Jove's daughter had,
Which Polydamna gave her, wife of Thon
Of Egypt, where the ground bears many drugs,
Some good when mixt, and some the cause of grief. 230
And each physician there is skilled beyond
All others, for of Pæon's race they are.
When she had put the drug within the bowl,
And bade them pour the wine forth, thus she spake :
' O Menelaus! Atreus' son divine ! 235
' And ye of noble sires the children ! (Jove
' To one and other sends both good and ill,
' For he's omnipotent) now sit and feast,
' Pleased with appropriate tales which I will tell.
' I cannot tell, not even name them all, 240
The struggles of Ulysses' patient mind ;
' Such deeds the valiant hero did and dared,
' When ye Greeks bore calamities at Troy.
' There with unseemly stripes he scarred himself,
' And, like a slave, upon his shoulders put 245
' Coarse rags, and slunk into the wide-way'd [town
' Of hostile men, and stealthily he took
' Another form, as of some beggar-man ;
' Who at the Grecian ships far other was.
' Ulysses came in form like him to] Troy.
' All by his craft were duped : but I alone, 250
' Though in such guise, detected him, and put
' Questions, which craftily he turned aside.
' But when I bathed and rubbed him o'er with oil,

‘ And put his garments on, I swear an oath
‘ Not to the Trojans to disclose his name
‘ Till he had reached the swift ships and the tents. 255
‘ And then he told me all the Grecians’ plan,
‘ And many Trojans with his sharp sword slew ;
‘ Then went, and gave the Greeks intelligence.
‘ While other Trojan matrons loudly wept,
(My heart rejoiced, for homeward it was turned,) 260
‘ And I bewailed the woe which Venus caused,
‘ Who took me thither from my native land,
‘ Leaving my daughter, marriage-bed, and spouse,
‘ One not deficient or in mind or form.’

Fair Menelaus answered her and said : 265

‘ All this, my wife ! thou hast correctly said.
‘ I well have known the counsel and the mind
‘ Of many heroes, and to many lands
‘ Have gone ; but never with these eyes have seen
‘ One with such heart as brave Ulysses had ; 270
‘ Who did or dared as did that valiant man
‘ Within the polished horse, where we, the best
‘ Of all the Argives, were enclosed, and brought
‘ Death and destruction to the Trojan men.
‘ Thou wentest thither ; ’twas some God that bade,
‘ Who to the Trojans wished to give renown. 275
‘ Deiphobus attended on thy steps :
‘ Thrice round the hollow ambush thou didst walk
‘ Inspecting, and the chiefest Greeks didst call
‘ By name, with voice that seem’d as of their wives.
‘ Divine Ulysses, Tydeus’ son, and I 280
‘ Among them sitting heard when thou didst speak.
‘ We two were both desirous to rush forth,

‘ Or from within to listen and reply :

‘ Ulysses checked us, eager as we were.

‘ [Then all the other Greeks in silence sate, 285

‘ Though Anticlus desired to make reply ;

‘ But with strong hand Ulysses pressed his lip

‘ Persistently, and so saved all the Greeks,

‘ And held it, till Minerva led thee off].’

The wise Telemachus replied and said : 290

‘ O godlike Menelaus ! Atreus’ son !

‘ Prince of the people ! this is sadder still ;

‘ For from himself he could not death repel,

‘ Not though he had an iron heart within.

‘ But come, permit us to our couch to go,

‘ And there reclining pleasant sleep enjoy.’ 295

He spake : the Argive Helen bade her maids

To place the beds beneath the sounding porch,

To spread thereon fair purple coverlets,

Carpets to lay, and vestments soft above.

They, bearing torches, from the hall went forth, 300

And spread the beds ; a herald led the guests.

There in the palace entrance-hall they slept,

Telemachus and Nestor’s noble son.

In a sequestered chamber of the house

The son of Atreus slept ; and by his side,

Woman divine, the long-robed Helen lay. 305

When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,

Brave Menelaus left his couch, and donned

His vest ; his sharp sword o’er his shoulders hung ;

Braced his fair sandals o’er his shining feet,

And, like some God, forth from his chamber came, 310

And, sitting by Telemachus, thus spake :

‘ What need has brought thee, O Telemachus !
 ‘ To Lacedæmon, o’er the broad sea’s back,
 ‘ Public or private ? truly tell me this.’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

315

‘ O godlike Menelaus ! Atreus’ son !
 ‘ Prince of the people ! I am come to hear
 ‘ If of my father thou canst give report.
 ‘ My substance is devoured, my goods destroyed,
 ‘ My house is full of enemies, who slay
 ‘ My folded sheep and slowly-trailing beeves, 320
 ‘ Unchecked, and haughtily my mother woo.
 ‘ So to thy knees I come a suppliant,
 ‘ If thou couldst tell me of his mournful death ;
 ‘ Hast seen it with thine eyes or heard report
 ‘ Of where he wanders. Him his mother bare 325
 ‘ Most wretched. Do not, from regard to me,
 ‘ Nor from compassion, tell me honeyed words,
 ‘ But tell me true, as thou hast heard report.
 ‘ I pray, if e’er Ulysses, my good sire,
 ‘ Has helped thee to accomplish word or deed
 ‘ In Troy, where ye Achæans suffered woes, 330
 ‘ These for my sake recall, and tell me true.’

Fair Menelaus answered him and said :

‘ O strange it is that in a strong man’s bed
 ‘ They should, so mean themselves, desire to lie !
 ‘ It is as though in some fierce lion’s lair 335
 ‘ A hind should leave her new-born suckling fawns
 ‘ Asleep, while she explores the woody slopes
 ‘ And grassy glens in search of food ; and he,
 ‘ Returning after to his den, should slay
 ‘ Them both : and thus Ulysses them will slay. 340

‘ O father Jove ! Minerva ! Phœbus ! would
‘ He such were now as in fair Lesbos once,
‘ A wrestler, matched with Philomēleus’ son
‘ Whom he o’erthrew, and all the Greeks rejoiced ;
‘ Would that Ulysses such the suitors met ! 345
‘ Their fate would swift, their marriage bitter be.
‘ As to thy questions and thy prayers, I will
‘ Nor give evasive answers nor deceive.
‘ What the old prophet of the sea declared
‘ I will not hide nor will conceal a word. 350
‘ In Egypt, when desirous to return,
‘ The Gods detained me. Perfect hecatombs
‘ I had not offered to them ; and the Gods
‘ Expect that men should think on their commands.
‘ There is an island in the storm-tost sea
‘ In front of Egypt, which they Pharos call ; 355
‘ Distant as far as could a hollow ship
‘ Make a day’s voyage when the wind blows fair.
‘ A harbour with good anchorage is there,
‘ Whence equal ships they launch into the sea,
‘ When they have drawn dark water from the spring.
‘ There the Gods kept me twenty days, nor once 360
‘ Appeared fair breezes blowing o’er the wave,
‘ Which on the broad sea’s back the ships convey.
‘ Provisions and men’s strength would all have failed,
‘ Had not a Goddess pitied me and saved,
‘ Daughter of Proteus, th’ old man of the sea, 365
‘ Eidothēa, whose mind I greatly moved.
‘ She met me lonely, from my friends apart ;
‘ For round the island wandering they fished
‘ With hooks, while hunger vexed our stomachs sore.

‘ She, standing near me, spoke this word and said : 370

‘ “ Stranger ! thou ’rt foolish, and thy mind ’s unstrung,

‘ “ Or, willingly inactive, courttest woe,

‘ “ Thus in the isle detained ; nor remedy

‘ “ Canst find, the while thy friends’ hearts waste away.”

‘ She spoke : I thus addressed her in reply : 375

‘ “ Whoever of the Goddesses thou art,

‘ “ I tell thee that I am not willingly

‘ “ Detained, but seem against th’ immortal Gods, *Gods*

‘ “ Who the wide sky inhabit, to have sinned *one of Gods*

(‘ “ But, for the Gods know all things,) tell me now

‘ “ Who of th’ immortals hinders and retards 380

‘ “ My voyage homeward o’er the fishy sea.”

‘ I spake : the Goddess thus forthwith replied :

‘ “ I will, O stranger ! speak with perfect truth.

‘ “ The old man of the sea this place frequents,

‘ “ Truthful, immortal, of Egyptian race, 385

‘ “ Proteus, who knows the depth of every sea,

‘ “ Servant of Neptune : him they call my sire.

‘ “ If him in ambush lying thou couldst catch,

‘ “ Thy way, and what the distance, he could tell,

‘ “ And what thy homeward voyage o’er the sea ; 390

‘ “ And, noble prince ! could tell, if thou wouldst
know,

‘ “ What good or ill is done at home, while thou

‘ “ Art absent on thy long and painful way.”

‘ ’Twas thus she spake, and in reply I said :

‘ “ Tell me the aged prophet’s lurking place, 395

‘ “ Lest he, fore-knowing and fore-warned, escape.

‘ “ ’Tis hard for mortal to subdue a God.”

‘ So spake I, and the Goddess thus replied :

- “ Well, stranger ! I with perfect truth will speak.
“ When the mid-sky the sun has overpast, 400
“ Forth from the sea the truthful sage will come,
“ While blows the Zephyr, clad in dusky fur,
“ And go to sleep beneath the hollow rocks.
“ Fin-footed seals around, from salt waves sprung,
“ Emerging from the sea, collected sleep, 405
“ Snorting the salt sea’s bitter odour forth.
“ Thither I’ll bring thee when the dawn appears,
“ And make recline : thou three companions choose,
“ The best of those who man thy well-benched ships.
“ I will recite the old man’s elfish tricks. 410
“ The sea’s he first will number and recount.
“ When he has reckoned and reviewed them all,
“ ’Mid them he’ll sleep as shepherd ’mid his flock.
“ And when ye first have seen him lulled to sleep,
“ Then summon to you all your force and strength,
“ And seize upon him eager to escape. 415
“ He will endeavour to become whate’er
“ There are of crawling creatures, water, fire.
“ Hold firmly on, and press him all the more.
“ When he himself shall question thee with words, 420
“ In shape as when ye saw him go to sleep,
“ Then slack your force, and set the old man free,
“ And ask him, hero ! who of all the Gods
“ Checks thy return, in anger, o’er the sea.”
‘ She spake, and plunged beneath the foaming wave.
‘ To the ships, drawn upon the beach, I went, 425
‘ And sore my heart was panting as I walked.
‘ When at the ship and sea I had arrived
‘ We supper served, and night divine came on ;

- ‘ And where the waves broke on the shore we slept.
‘ When early rosy-fingered dawn appeared, 430
‘ Along the sea’s wide-spreading shore I went,
‘ With much pray’r to the Gods, and took three
 friends,
‘ On whom, in ev’ry need, I trusted most.
‘ Then she beneath the wide sea’s bosom plunged, 435
‘ And from the deep the skins of four seals brought,
‘ New-stripped, and planned a fraud upon her sire.
‘ Then, in the sea-sand having trenches dug,
‘ She sate and waited : we to her approached.
‘ She made us lie, and put a skin on each. 440
‘ Dreadful our ambush would have been ; the stench
‘ Of the sea-nurtured seals so dreadfully
‘ Oppressed us : who with sea-bred beasts would lie ?
‘ But she preserved and gave us great relief.
‘ She brought, and on the nostrils placed of each, 445
‘ Ambrosia, sweetly-breathing, and destroyed
‘ The stench ; and all the morn we patient lay.
‘ Forth from the sea came seals in crowds, and they
‘ Lay down to sleep in order on the shore.
‘ The old man from the sea came forth at noon ; 450
‘ Found the fat seals ; o’erlooked and counted all ;
‘ Reckoned us first among them, nor perceived
‘ The fraud ; and then himself lay down to sleep.
‘ We with a shout rushed on, and round him threw
‘ Our hands ; but he did not his craft forget, 455
‘ But first a bearded lion he became,
‘ A dragon next, a leopard and a boar ;
‘ Then liquid water, and a high-branched tree,
‘ While we, with patient mind, held firmly on.

- ‘ But when the old man, skilled in elfish tricks, 460
‘ Was grieved, enquiring of me thus he spake :
‘ “ What God, Atrides ! has this plan devised
‘ “ To snare me ’gainst my will ? what needest thou ? ”
‘ He spake, and I replying to him said :
‘ “ Old man ! thou knowst, why speak misleading me ?
‘ “ How in the island I’m detained, nor find, 465
‘ “ While wastes my heart away, a remedy.
‘ “ But, for the Gods know all things, tell me this :
‘ “ Who of th’ immortals hinders and retards
‘ “ My voyage homeward o’er the fishy sea ? ”
‘ I spake : and he forthwith replied and said : 470
‘ “ Aye ! but thou oughtest to have gone on board,
‘ “ Having to Jove and to the other Gods
‘ “ Due off’rings made, that swiftly thou mightst go
‘ “ Unto thy country o’er the dusky sea.
‘ “ It is not fate that thou shouldst see thy friends, 475
‘ “ Nor to thy high-roofed house and native land
‘ “ Shouldst go, before that thou hast visited
‘ “ Th’ Egyptian river’s water, sprung from Jove,
‘ “ And shouldst have offered to th’ immortal Gods,
‘ “ Who dwell in heaven, sacred hecatombs.
‘ “ Then the return thou seekest they will grant.” 480
‘ He spake : and in me my dear heart was crushed,
‘ For that he ordered me upon the sea
‘ To go to Egypt ; voyage long and hard.
‘ Yet even so I answered with these words :
‘ “ Old man ! as thou commandest I will do. 485
‘ “ But tell me this, and tell me truthfully,
‘ “ If all the Greeks have safely with their ships
‘ “ Arrived, whom I and Nestor, when from Troy

- “ We went, had left there ; or if any one
 “ By bitter death has perished in his ship,
 “ Or in his friends’ hands when he ceased from war.”
 ‘ So spake I : he immediately replied : 490
 “ O son of Atreus ! why enquire of this ?
 “ It fits thee not to know or search my mind ;
 “ Nor, shouldst thou hear it, do I think that thou
 “ Wouldst long be free from sorrow ; for of them
 “ While many perished many yet were left. 495
 “ Two leaders only perished of the Greeks
 “ On their return, whom thou hast joined in fight.
 “ One, living, by the wide sea is detained ;
 “ Ajax was killed among the long-oar’d ships.
 “ Neptune first drove them on the Gyrian rocks, 500
 “ And saved him from the sea ; and death he would,
 “ Though hated by Minerva, have escaped,
 “ Had he not uttered a proud speech, and sinned.
 “ He said that, in despite of all the Gods,
 “ He would escape the great gulf of the sea.) *stop why not*
 “ Neptune o’erheard him speak these haughty words.
 “ Then in his strong hands he his trident took, 505
 “ Drove at and cleft in twain the Gyrian rock.
 “ Part there remained, part fell into the sea ;
 “ And Ajax, seated there, was greatly hurt.
 “ It plunged him in the boundless surging sea, 510
 “ And there, the salt wave drinking in, he died.
 “ Thy brother had avoided and escaped
 “ Death in the hollow ships, for Juno saved.
 “ But, when to Malea’s mountain he approached, 515
 “ A tempest caught, and o’er the fishy sea
 “ Hurried him onward, utt’ring many groans,

- ‘ “ To th’ headland, where Thyestes used to dwell,
‘ “ But then Ægisthus from Thyestes sprung.
‘ “ When there it seem’d that his return was safe.
‘ “ The Gods a fair breeze gave, and home they went. 520
‘ “ With joy he climbed his native land again,
‘ “ And, touching, kissed it, while hot tears fell down,
‘ “ As with delight he saw the land again.
‘ “ Him from the watch-tower spied a scout, whom there
‘ “ Crafty Ægisthus placed, and promised him 525
‘ “ Two golden talents. For a year he watched
‘ “ Lest Agamemnon pass him unobserved,
‘ “ And his impetuous strength again recall.
‘ “ Then to the house he went to tell the king.
‘ “ Ægisthus speedily a scheme devised,
‘ “ And twenty chosen men in ambush placed, 530
‘ “ And in the further hall a feast prepared.
‘ “ Then Agamemnon, king of men, he went
‘ “ With chariots and horses to invite,
‘ “ Planning atrocious deeds ; and at the feast
‘ “ Destruction brought on him, and slew,
‘ “ As at the manger one would slay an ox. 535
‘ “ Not one of all Atrides’ friends was left,
‘ “ Nor of Ægisthus : all were slaughtered there.”
‘ So spake he, and my very heart was crushed.
‘ Sitting upon the sands I wept ; my heart
‘ No longer wished to live, nor sun’s light see. 540
‘ But, when my grief and agitation ceased,
‘ Thus spoke the ancient prophet of the sea :
‘ “ Weep not, Atrides ! thus incessantly,
‘ “ For we shall gain no object ; but forthwith
‘ “ Endeavour to thy native land to go. 545

“ Either thou’lt find him living, or perhaps
“ Orestes, coming in before thee, may
“ Have slain, and thou but light upon his tomb.”
‘ He spake, and, grieving as I was, my heart
‘ And noble soul revived within my breast ;
‘ And thus I spake to him with winged-words : 550
“ These, then I know ; but now the third man name,
“ Who, living, by the wide sea is detained,
“ [Or who is dead : though grieved I fain would hear.]”
‘ So said I, and forthwith he answered me :
“ Laertes’ son, who dwells in Ithaca ; 555
“ I saw him on an island shedding tears,
“ In nymph Calypso’s house, who him by force
“ Detains ; nor can he to his country go,
“ For he has neither well-oared ships nor friends
“ To send him o’er the broad back of the sea. 560
“ ’Tis not, O Menelaus ! sprung from Jove !
“ Thy fate in Argos, famed for steeds, to die,
“ But to th’ Elysian plain, earth’s furthest bound,
“ The Gods will send thee. Rhadamanthus there
“ Abides, and there the easiest life for men. 565
“ No winter, snow, nor too much rain is there,
“ But ocean sends the gently-breathing gales
“ Of zephyr, ever to refresh mankind ;
“ For Helen’s spouse, Jove’s son-in-law thou art.”
‘ He spake, and plunged beneath the foaming sea. 570
‘ I to my ship, with my heroic friends,
‘ Returned : my heart much panted as I went.
‘ When to the ship and to the sea I came,
‘ The supper we prepared ; the (night divine)
‘ Came on, and, where the sea waves broke, we slept. 575

' When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
 ' First to the sea divine our ships we drew,
 ' Fixed masts and sails upon the well-trimmed ships.
 ' The men embarking on the benches sate,
 ' And beat the sea in order with their oars. 580
 ' Back on Egyptus' Jove-sprung stream I stayed
 ' The ships, and offered perfect hecatombs.
 ' When I had soothed the anger of the Gods,
 ' I built a tomb to Agamemnon's fame.
 ' This done, I homeward turned. Th' immortal Gods 585
 ' Fair breezes gave, and sent me to my home.
 ' But come, do thou within my house remain
 ' Till the eleventh or the twelfth day come.
 ' Then will I send thee onward, and will give
 ' Fair gifts; three horses and a well-wrought car; 590
 ' A beauteous bowl, that to th' immortal Gods
 ' Libation thou mayst make, rememb'ring me.'

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

' O son of Atreus ! here detain me not : *Recognition*
 ' Though I would gladly stay with thee a year, 595
 ' And not regret my parents or my home,
 ' Delighting greatly in thy tales and words.
 ' Yet now the friends whom I at Pylos left
 ' Are grieving while thou here detainest me.
 ' The cup thou giv'st me shall a keep-sake be. 600
 ' To Ithaca I will not take the steeds,
 ' But leave them here, an honour to thyself.
 ' Thou rulest o'er a plain where trefoil grows,
 ' Wheat, rushes, maize, white barley spreading wide.
 ' In Ithaca nor meadows are nor plains, 605
 ' The goat more suited than the horse to feed.

‘None of the islands sloping to the sea
 ‘Are for the horse-course suited, nor abound
 ‘In meadows ; Ithaca beyond them all.’

He spake : the warlike Menelaus smiled, 610
 Caressed him with his hand, and thus replied :
 ‘Dear youth ! thy words attest thy noble blood.
 ‘I will then change the presents, for I can.
 ‘Whatever treasures in my house are stored,
 ‘The fairest and most precious I will give.
 ‘A goblet I will give thee, fashioned all 615
 ‘Of silver, finished off with lips of gold,
 ‘The work of Vulcan : noble Phædimus,
 ‘The king of the Sidonians, gave it me
 ‘When his house sheltered me on my return ;
 ‘And this to thee I willingly will give.’

Such converse they with one another held. 620
 [To the king’s house the serving-men repaired ;
 Some led the sheep, some brought th’ inspiring wine.
 The wives, with beauteous handkerchiefs, brought wine ;
 And thus the feast they in the house prepared.] *Change of*

Meanwhile the suitors in Ulysses’ hall 625
 In hurling quoits and javelins took delight
 On the smooth pavement, haughty as before.
 Antinous and fair Eurymachus,
 Chief of the suitors and most brave, sate there.
 Noëmon, son of Phronius, approached, 630
 And to Antinous enquiring spoke :
 ‘Are we aware, Antinous ! or not
 ‘From sandy Pylos when Telemachus
 ‘Returned ? for he has ta’en my ship, and I
 ‘Have need of it to Elis’ plains to go, 635

‘Where I have twelve mares with laborious mules
‘Unbroken, some of which I wish to train.’

He spake ; they wondered, for they did not know
That to Neleian Pylos he had gone,
But thought ’twas to the swine-herd or the sheep. 640
Antinous, Eupeithes’ son, replied :

‘Tell me the truth ; when went he, and what youths
‘Attended ? were they chosen Ithacans,
‘Or his own serfs and hirelings ? this might be.
‘And this too tell me true, that I may know : 645
‘Did he against thy will the vessel take,
‘Or didst thou give it, when he urged his plea ?’

Noëmon, son of Phronius, replied :

‘I gave it to him. What else could one do,
‘When such a man, with troubles in his mind, 650
‘Requested ? to deny the gift were hard.
‘The young men, who among us are esteemed
‘The best, attended. Mentor chief I saw,
‘Or else some God, so very like he was.
‘But this I wonder at ; for yesterday, 655
‘At early morning, I saw Mentor here ;
‘But then to Pylos in the ship he went.’

He spake, and to his father’s house repaired,
And both their minds with wonder were perplexed.
They made the suitors sit and cease their games.
Then spake Antinous, Eupeithes’ son, 660
[In grief: with gloomy thoughts their minds were filled,
And his eyes sparkled like a fiery flame]:
‘O strange ! this journey of Telemachus
‘Is a great deed, and proudly has been done,
‘But will not, we suppose, be finished so.

‘ In spite of us so many, this young boy 665
 ‘ Has gone and launched a ship, and chosen out
 ‘ The best men of the land : this ill will grow.
 ‘ May Jove destroy him ere he ruins us !
 ‘ But give me a swift ship, and twenty men,
 ‘ That I may lie in ambush, and keep watch
 ‘ For him upon his voyage, in the strait
 ‘ That between Ithaca and Samos lies ;
 ‘ That sad may be his voyage for his sire.’

He spake : they all approved, and orders gave,
 And rising, went within Ulysses’ house.

Nor was Penelope long uninformed 675
 Of what the suitors brooded in their minds.
 Medon, the herald, told her, who without
 The palace heard what they devised within,
 And went to tell it to Penelope.

Penelope addressed him as he passed 680
 Across the threshold : ‘ Herald ! tell me why
 ‘ The noble suitors have despatched thee thus ?
 ‘ Is it to bid Ulysses’ maidens cease
 ‘ From labour, and prepare a feast for them ?
 ‘ May they no more come wooing, nor combine
 ‘ In crowds, but eat their last last supper here ! 685
 ‘ Ye who in swarming bands much substance eat,
 ‘ The property of wise Telemachus ;
 ‘ Nor from the sires, whose sons ye are, have heard
 ‘ Of former days ; what man Ulysses was,
 ‘ Not doing deed nor saying word unjust 690
 ‘ Among the people, as good rulers ought ;
 ‘ Nor hated one man and another loved,
 ‘ Nor did to any act of violence ;

‘ So that your thoughts and deeds unseemly are,
 ‘ Nor is there gratitude for favours past.’ 695

Medon with prudent thought to her replied :
 ‘ Would that, O queen ! this were the greatest ill !
 ‘ But one much greater and more dangerous
 ‘ The suitors plan, which may not Jove complete !
 ‘ With the sharp sword they eager are to slay
 ‘ Telemachus, as homeward he returns. 700
 ‘ He for some tidings of his sire is gone
 ‘ To Pylos and to sacred Sparta’s land.’

So spake he ; and her knees and heart grew weak ;
 Silence from words she kept ; her eyes were filled :
 With tears ; her voice was stifled by her sobs : 705
 But with these words at last she made reply :

‘ O herald ! tell me why my son is gone.
 ‘ No need for him in swift ships to embark,
 ‘ In ships that are the horses of the sea
 ‘ For men to cross its watery expanse.
 ‘ Is it for fear he leave no fame behind ?’ 710

Medon with prudent thought to her replied :
 ‘ I know not whether some divinity
 ‘ Excited him, or his own mind impelled,
 ‘ To go to Pylos, tidings to obtain
 ‘ Or of his sire’s return or how he died.’

He spake, and to Ulysses’ house retired. 715
 Heart-breaking grief o’erwhelmed her ; on no seat,
 Though many were there, could she bear to sit,
 But on the well-wrought chamber’s floor she crouched,
 Piteously wailing, and her maidens groaned,
 All in the house who were, both young and old. 720
 Them, weeping much, Penelope addressed :

‘ Hear, friends ! high Jove has more afflicted me
‘ Than all who with me have been born and bred ;
‘ Who first my good and valiant husband lost,
‘ Among the Greeks for many virtues famed 725
‘ [In Hellas and mid-Argos wide his fame] ;
‘ Now storms have torn my darling son away
‘ Inglorious, nor heard I when he went.
‘ Unkind ! not one among you had the thought
‘ To rouse me from my couch, though well aware 730
‘ When in the black ship he designed to go.
‘ For, had I heard that he such voyage planned,
‘ He would have stayed, though eager to be gone,
‘ Or would have left me dying in the house.
‘ One of you quickly call old Dolius, 735
‘ The serf whom when I came my father gave.
‘ He tends the shady garden : bid him go
‘ Quick to Laertes and these things narrate,
‘ To see if he will some wise scheme devise,
‘ And mourning to the people go, who wish 740
‘ Him and the brave Ulysses’ son to kill.’

To her Euryclea, her nurse, replied :

‘ Dear daughter ! kill me with unpitying sword,
‘ Or let me live : no word will I conceal.
‘ I knew it all ; I gave him what he asked, 745
‘ Food and sweet wine ; from me a solemn oath
‘ He took that, till the twelfth day had arrived,
‘ Or till thyself shouldst miss him, or shouldst hear
‘ Of his departure, I would tell thee nought,
‘ Lest thy fair form with weeping thou shouldst waste.
‘ But bathe thyself, and put fresh garments on ; 750
‘ Go to thine upper chamber with thy maids

‘And to Minerva pray, of mighty Jove
 ‘The child, for she can save him e’en from death.
 ‘Vex not the vexed old man; for not, I deem,
 ‘Are the descendants of Arceisias
 ‘Utterly hated by the blessed Gods.
 ‘One of them yet will come, who will possess
 ‘Their lofty houses and wide fertile fields.’

755

She speaking soothed her moan and dried her eyes.
 She bathed herself and put fresh garments on;
 Went to the upper chamber with her maids;
 Offered the cakes, and to Minerva prayed:
 ‘Hear me, unconquered child of mighty Jove!
 ‘If e’er the wise Ulysses in his house
 ‘Fat thighs of ox or sheep has sacrificed,
 ‘Think now on this for me, and save my son,
 ‘And those vile haughty suitors drive away.’

760

765

She spake and groaned: the Goddess heard her prayer.

The suitors gathered in the shady halls,
 And of the haughty youths thus some one said:
 ‘Surely the spousal rites the much-wooed queen
 ‘Prepares, nor knows what death awaits her son.’

770

Thus some one spake: they knew not how it was.
 Antinous harangued them thus and said:

‘Unwise! restrain all overbearing words,
 ‘Lest some one tidings bear the house within.
 ‘Come, let us rise and silent execute
 ‘The plan agreed on in the minds of all.’

775

Thus speaking he selected twenty men:
 Then to the swift ship and the shore they went.
 Into the deep sea first of all they drew

780

The ship, and masts and sails they placed within ;
 Upon the leathern rowlocks fixed the oars,
 All in due order, and the white sails spread,
 While the proud servants brought the tackling in.
 They anchored in the deep ; then disembarked, 785
 Took food, and waited till the evening came.

Penelope lay in the upper room
 Fasting, and tasting neither food nor drink,
 Revolving if her son would death escape,
 Or by the haughty suitors be destroyed. 790
 As when a lion in a crowd of men
 Fears when they form a treacherous circle round,
 So sweet sleep came on her revolving thus,
 And, with her limbs relaxed, she lay and slept.

Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts. 795
 She made an image in a woman's form,
 Like to Iphthimè, who the daughter was
 Of brave Icarius, whom Eumèlus took
 To wife, in Pheræ having his abode.

She sent her to divine Ulysses' house,
 That she might make the sad Penelope 800
 To cease from weeping and from tearful groans.
 She to her chamber went, the bolt withdrew,
 Stood o'er her head, and then addressed her thus :
 'Sleep'st thou, Penelope ! with grieving heart ?
 'The Gods who live at ease permit thee not 805
 'To weep and wail : thy son will home return,
 'Because he has not sinned against the Gods.'

To her the wise Penelope replied,
 While sweetly slumb'ring in the dreamy gates :
 'Why, sister ! com'st thou hither ? not before 810

‘ Was it thy wont, who dwell’st so far away.
 ‘ Thou bidd’st me cease from wailing, and the griefs
 ‘ Which num’rous agitate my mind and thoughts,
 ‘ Who first my good and valiant husband lost,
 ‘ Among the Greeks for varied virtues famed ; 815
 ‘ [In Hellas and mid-Argos wide his fame.]
 ‘ Now in the ship my darling son has gone,
 ‘ Young, ignorant of councils and of toils ;
 ‘ And more I grieve for him than for his sire,
 ‘ And tremble for him lest some ill he meet, 820
 ‘ Or on the land he goes to or the sea.
 ‘ For many enemies against him plot,
 ‘ And seek to kill him ere he home arrives.’

The image, indistinctly seen, replied :

‘ Take courage ; fear not in thy mind too much. 825
 ‘ A guardian leads him, such as other men
 ‘ Pray to stand by them, for indeed she can,
 ‘ Minerva : she compassionates thy grief,
 ‘ Who sends me hither now to tell thee this.’

The wise Penelope replied and said : 830

‘ If God thou art and hear’st the voice of God,
 ‘ Come tell me of that other wretched man,
 ‘ If yet he lives and yet the sun’s light sees,
 ‘ Or if he’s dead and is in Pluto’s halls.’

The image, indistinctly seen, replied : 835

‘ I will not tell thee plainly if he lives
 ‘ Or if he’s dead ; ’tis wrong vain words to speak.’

The image spake, and by the portal’s bar
 Into the breezy air retired, and she,
 Icarus’ daughter, rose up from her sleep. 840
 Her heart was lightened, for a dream distinct

Had come upon her in the dead of night.

Meanwhile the suitors went on board and sailed
Upon the wat'ry way, and dreadful death
Planned in their minds against Telemachus.
In the mid-sea a certain rocky isle 845
'Tween Ithaca and rugged Samos lies,
Called Asteris, not large : the harbour's mouth
Is double : there the lurking suitors lay.

BOOK V.

Scene in

AURORA, from the famed Tithonus' side,
Sprang from her couch with light for Gods and men.
The Gods were sitting on their thrones, and Jove
Among them, thund'rer, God of greatest might.

Minerva to their mem'ry brought and told

The many sorrows which Ulysses had,
In the nymph's house the object of her care :

' O father Jove ! and ye immortal Gods !

' Henceforth let never sceptre-bearing king

' Strive to be gentle, mild and well-disposed.

' Let him be stern, and godless deeds commit,

' Since none of those o'er whom he reigned recalls

' What a kind sire divine Ulysses was.

Now on an island, suff'ring many woes,

In nymph Calypso's house he lies, while she

Detains him that he cannot homeward go.

' No ships equipped with oars nor friends has he

' Who can escort him o'er the broad sea's back.

' His much-loved son they now desire to kill
 ' Returning to his home ; for he is gone;
 ' To learn some tidings of his absent sire,
 ' To Pylos and to sacred Sparta's land.' 20

The cloud-compelling Jove replied and said :

' My child ! what word has issued from thy lips ?
 ' Was it not thou that didst devise a plan
 ' That he should come and vengeance on them take ?
 ' Guide skilfully Telemachus (thou canst) 25
 ' That scatheless to his country he may go,
 ' And in their ship the suitors quick return.'

He spake, and Mercury his son addressed :

' Go, Mercury ! thou art my messenger,
 ' And tell the fair-haired nymph our firm design 30
 ' That home the brave Ulysses shall return,
 ' Not with the escort or of Gods or men,
 ' But let him go upon a well-bound raft,
 ' And, suff'ring much, upon the twentieth day
 ' Reach fertile Scheria, the Phœacians' land, 35
 ' Men almost godlike, who will honour him
 ' As though he were a God with all their heart,
 ' And in a ship will send him to his home ;
 ' Brass, gold, and vests abundantly bestow ;
 ' More than Ulysses would have brought from Troy,
 ' Had he come safe and with his share of spoil. 40
 ' Thus it is fate that he his friends should see,
 ' And to his high-roofed house and country come.'

He spoke, nor Argeiphontes disobeyed.

Forthwith he bound fair sandals on his feet,
 Ambrosial, golden, which o'er earth and sea 45
 Would bear him swift as breezes of the wind.

The rod he took, wherewith at will he soothes
The eyes of men, and wakes again from sleep :
This holding mighty Argeiphontes flew,
And reached Pieria from the upper air. 50
He lighted on the sea, and o'er the wave
Skimmed, like a gull, which in the dreadful gulfs
Of the unfruitful sea, in search of fish,
Wets in the spray its closely-feathered wings ;
So o'er the many waves rode Mercury.
But, to the distant island when he came, 55
From the dark sea he went upon the ground,
Till to the mighty cave he came, where dwelt
The fair-haired nymph, and her within he found.
A fire was burning on the hearth ; the scent
Of the cleft cedar and the sandal wood 60
Was fragrant through the island as they blazed.
She, singing with her lovely voice the while,
A golden shuttle plied and wove a web.
A grove grew flourishing around the cave,
The alder, poplar, and the cypress sweet.
Birds with their long-stretched necks were nestling
there, 65
Owls, hawks, and cormorants with chattering tongues ;
Sea-birds that have their work upon the waves.
A vine extended o'er the hollow cave
Of vig'rous growth, luxuriant with grapes.
Four fountains poured their limpid water forth, 70
Each to the other turning with its stream.
With violets and parsley bloomed the meads
Around ; and even an immortal God
Who came would look with pleasure at the sight.

Hermes, the messenger, there stood and gazed. 75

When in his mind he had admired it all,

Into the cavern wide forthwith he went.

Divine Calypso knew him when she saw :

Not to each other are the Gods unknown,

However far apart they each may dwell. 80

He did not find the brave Ulysses there :

He on the beach sate weeping as before,

[Vexing his mind with tears, and groans and griefs,

Tearfully gazing o'er the barren sea].

Divine Calypso questioned Mercury, 85

When she had placed him on a shining throne :

'Why com'st thou, Hermes of the golden rod !

'Thou, reverend and dear ! who com'st not oft ?

'Tell me thy purpose, which I would perform

'If but I can, and it can be performed. 90

'[Advance and take my hospitality.]'

So spake the Goddess, and a table set

Piled with ambrosia and the nectar red.

Hermes, the messenger, both eat and drank.

When with the feast he satisfied his mind, 95

Then with these words he answered her and said :

'Goddess ! a God thou questionest ; but I

'Will tell the truth, for such is thy command.

'Jove ordered me, against my wish, to come.

'Who willingly so much salt sea would cross, 100

'Immense ? no city is there near of men

'Who offer to the Gods choice hecatombs ;

'But still the will of ægis-bearing Jove

'No other God may thwart or render void.

'He says that there is with thee one most grieved 105

‘ Of all men who round Priam’s city fought
 ‘ Nine years ; destroyed it in the tenth ; and went
 ‘ Homeward : but Pallas they on their return
 ‘ Offended : she foul wind and mighty waves
 ‘ Raised up against them [and the rest all died ; 110
 ‘ But him the winds and waves have hither brought],
 ‘ Him Jove commands that thou shouldst send away
 ‘ With speed : it is not fate that he should die. *Fate*
 ‘ Here in this land, far parted from his friends :
 ‘ But ’tis his lot to see his friends, and go
 ‘ To his high house and his paternal land.’ 115

Divine Calypso shuddered as he spoke,
 And then addressed him with these winged words :
 ‘ Hard above all and jealous are ye Gods,
 ‘ Who grudge that Goddesses should mate with men
 ‘ In open wedlock, should one choose a spouse. 120
 ‘ Aurora of the rosy fingers chose
 ‘ Orion, and ye tranquil Gods were wroth.
 ‘ [Him chaste Diana of the golden throne
 ‘ Slew in Ortygia with her painless darts.]
 ‘ So fair-haired Ceres with Iasion, 125
 ‘ To passion yielding, was in wedlock joined
 ‘ In the thrice furrowed field ; not long unknown
 ‘ To Jove, who killed him with his gleaming bolt.
 ‘ Ye Gods are jealous that a mortal man
 ‘ Is here, whom clinging to the keel I saved 130
 ‘ Alone, when Jove with gleaming bolt had struck
 ‘ His ship, and wrecked it in the gloomy sea.
 ‘ His good companions all were there destroyed,
 ‘ But him the winds and billows hither drove.
 ‘ Kindly I treated, fed him, and proposed 135

' To make him deathless, youthful, all his days.
 ' But, since the will of ægis-bearing Jove
 ' No other God may thwart or render void,
 ' Let him depart, since thus he gives command,
 ' Over the barren sea ; but I will not 140
 ' Convey him, for I have not ships nor friends
 ' Who may conduct him o'er the broad sea's back :
 ' But willing I will tell him, nor conceal,
 ' How scatheless he his native land may reach.'

Hermes, the messenger, to her replied : 145
 ' Send him away then, and Jove's wrath respect,
 ' Lest afterwards with thee he be enraged.'

Strong Mercury thus spoke and went away.
 Soon as the nymph adorable had heard
 Jove's message, she to brave Ulysses went. 150
 She found him on the shore ; his eyes from tears
 Were never dry : his sweet life ebbed away
 In grief for home ; the nymph no longer pleased,
 Though by her in the cave at night he slept 155
 Perforce, unwilling by a willing spouse.
 By day he sate upon the rocks and beach,
 Vexing his mind with tears, and groans and griefs,
 And weeping looked upon the barren sea.
 The Goddess standing near him thus addressed :
 ' Weep not, ill-fated one ! nor let thy life 160
 ' Thus pine away ; I'll freely let thee go.
 ' Come, cut long timbers with an axe, and frame
 ' A raft ; upon it fix a lofty deck
 ' That it may bear thee o'er the gloomy sea.
 ' Food, water, and red wine I'll place therein, 165
 ' To cheer thine heart and hunger drive away ;

‘ Will clothe thee, and will send a fav’ring breeze,
 ‘ That thou mayst scatheless to thy country go,
 ‘ If the Gods will, who in the broad sky dwell,
 ‘ Stronger than I to plan and execute.’ 170

She spake : Ulysses, man of sufferings great,
 Shuddered, and thus with winged words replied :
 ‘ O Goddess ! surely something else than this
 ‘ Thou plannest, not at all my voyage home ;
 ‘ Who bidd’st me on a raft the sea’s vast depth
 ‘ Dread, difficult to cross, which not e’en ships 175
 ‘ Equal and swift, rejoicing in Jove’s breeze,
 ‘ May pass. I would not ’gainst thy will embark
 ‘ Upon a raft, unless, O Goddess ! thou
 ‘ Wouldst deign to swear to me a mighty oath
 ‘ No other ill against me to devise.’

Thus as he spoke divine Calypso smiled, 180
 Caressed him with her hand, and thus replied :
 ‘ Sure thou art crafty, skilled in no vain arts,
 ‘ Who hadst the thought to offer such a speech.
 ‘ Let earth attest, and heaven stretched above,
 ‘ And water of the Styx which rolls below
 ‘ (Oath greatest, strongest for the blessed Gods), 185
 ‘ That I no evil will against thee plan ;
 ‘ But I will counsel and contrive for thee
 ‘ What, were there need, I’d purpose for myself.
 // My mind is upright, and my heart within // 190
 // My breast not iron but compassionate.’ //

The Goddess spake, and quickly led the way,
 And he her footsteps followed as she went,
 Entering the cave, the Goddess and the man.
 Upon the seat whence Hermes rose he sate, 195

And the nymph placed before him ev'ry food
To eat and drink ; such food as mortals eat.
She of divine Ulysses sate in front ;
The maidens nectar and ambrosia brought
For her ; and on the feast their hands they laid. 200
When they with meat and drink were satisfied,
Divine Calypso converse thus began :

' Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes' noble son !
' Dost thou to home and thy dear native land 205
' Thus long to go ? if so may good betide !
' But didst thou know what woes it is thy fate
' To suffer, ere arriving at thy home,
' Here thou wouldst stay with me and guard this house,
' And be immortal, eager though to see
' Thy wife, whom thou art always pining for. 210
' And yet I boast that not inferior
' Am I to her in form or countenance ;
' Nor is it fit in beauty or in shape
' For mortals with immortals to contend.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :
' Goddess adorable ! O not for this 215
' Be angry with me ! for I know full well
' That chaste Penelope must yield to thee
' To look upon, in figure and in face,
' She mortal, thou immortal, ever young.
' But even so I wish and long all day
' For home, and my returning day to see. 220
' If some God wreck me on the darksome wave
' I will endure, and have a patient mind.
' Already woes and toils I have endured
' In waves and wars ; let this to them be joined.'

He spake : the sun went down and darkness came.
They, going to the hollow cave's recess, 225
Each by the other stayed and joyed in love.
When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
Ulysses put his vest and mantle on.
The nymph a cloak of silv'ry whiteness took 230
Slender and graceful ; put around her waist
A golden belt, upon her head a veil ;
Then planned to send Ulysses on his way.
She gave into his hands a mighty axe,
Well-fitted, brazen, sharpened on both sides, 235
With a fair olive handle fixed therein ;
A polished hatchet next, and led the way
To th' isle's extremity where tall trees grew,
The alder, poplar, and the tow'ring pine,
Dry and well-seasoned, which would lightly float. 240
When she had shewn him where the tall trees grew,
Divine Calypso to her house returned.
But he cut beams and quickly did the work.
Twenty he felled and lopped them with the axe,
Smoothed skilfully and straightened by the line. 245
Divine Calypso then the gimlets brought ;
He drilled the planks and fitted each to each,
And hammered skilfully the bolts and joints.
Such a ship's frame, broad and for burthen fit,
As one would fashion skilled in shipwright's art, 250
Such frame upon the raft, Ulysses made.
He formed the deck, compact with frequent spars,
And with long planks he made the raft complete.
He formed the mast and fitted on the yard,
He made a rudder to direct its course, 255

And guarded it throughout with willow rods,
Defence against the waves, and put much on.
Divine Calypso then the canvas brought
To form the sails, and these he made with skill ;
The braces, shrouds and ropes therein he bound, 260
And dragged it down with levers to the sea.

'Twas the fourth day, and all was now complete :
Him on the fifth divine Calypso sent
From th' island, clothing first in fragrant vests,
And bathing. Then the Goddess put on board
Of the black wine one skin, of water one, 265
And of cooked meats a plentiful supply ;
And made a fav'ring gentle wind to blow.

Rejoicing in the breeze, Ulysses spread
The sails, and sitting at the helm he steered, 270
Watching the Pleiads and Boötes, slow
To set, and Arctos, which men call the wain,
Which, turning on itself, Orion spies,
Alone not sharing in the ocean's bath. 275

Calypso, nymph divine, had bade him keep
This on the left hand as he sailed along. :
Over the sea for seventeen days he sailed ;
On the eighteenth appeared the shady hills
Where the Phæacian land the nearest was, 280
Which like a shield seemed on the dusky sea.

Him royal Neptune saw, as he returned
From Æthiopia, from the distant hills
Of Solymi, thus sailing o'er the sea ;
And more than ever in his heart enraged,
Shaking his head, he thus himself addressed : 285
' Strange ! how the other Gods their plans have changed

‘ About Ulysses, while I absent was
 ‘ In Æthiopia ; and now he comes
 ‘ Near the Phæacian land ; whence fate decrees
 ‘ That he the great woe which draws near escape :
 ‘ Still I propose to send him woe enough.’ 290

Speaking he piled the clouds and stirred the sea,
 Holding the trident in his hand, and roused
 The blasts of all the winds ; and earth and sea
 Covered with clouds, while night rushed down the sky.
 Eurys and Notus, Zephyr violent, 295

And stormy Boreas rolling mighty waves
 Came rushing on ; Ulysses’ knees and heart
 Fainted, and troubled to himself he said :
 ‘ O wretched me ! what will fall out at last ?
 ‘ The Goddess has, I fear, told all things true, 300
 ‘ Who said that I should suffer woes at sea
 ‘ Before that to my native land I came.

‘ This now is done. O with what dreadful clouds
 ‘ Does Jupiter the spreading sky surround,
 ‘ And stir the sea, while blasts of every wind 305
 ‘ Come rushing on ! Now is my fate assured.

‘ Thrice, four times happy were the Greeks who died
 ‘ In Troy’s wide plain for the Atrides’ sake.

‘ O that I there had died and met my fate
 Upon that day when many Trojans hurled 310
 ‘ Darts o’er Achilles’ corpse ! funereal rites

‘ I should have had, and honour from the Greeks ;
 ‘ Now an ignoble death I’m doomed to die.’

Against a rock a great wave, as he spoke,
 Dashed him, and rushing on, whirled round the raft.
 Far from the raft he fell, and from his hands 315

Let go the rudder ; and the dreadful storm
 Of mingled winds came on and broke the mast ;
 And shrouds and deck fell down into the sea.
 Long time it overwhelmed him, nor could he
 Rise quickly from the billows' mighty force, 320
 The vests Calypso gave so weighed him down.
 He rose at last, ejecting from his mouth
 The bitter brine which flowed abundant down.
 Yet did he not in this distress forget
 The raft, but turning seized it in the waves, 325
 And sate avoiding death ; the mighty sea
 Hither, and thither, bore him on its flood.
 As when autumnal Boreas sweeps the thorns,
 That closely cling together, o'er the plain ;
 So the storm hither, thither, drove the sea. 330
 Notus let Boreas urge the raft along ;
 To Zephyr Eurus yielded the pursuit.
 Him the fair-ankled child of Cadmus saw,
Ino Leucothea, who mortal voice
 Had once, but in the sea's waves now obtained 335
 A God's renown. When she Ulysses saw,
 She pitied him, a wand'rer woe-begone
 [And like a sea-gull rose from 'neath the deep.]
 She sate upon the well-joined raft and said :
 ' O why is Neptune, ruler of the sea,
 ' With thee, ill-fated man ! so much displeased ? 340
 ' Why does he plan so many woes for thee ?
 ' He will not slay thee, though so much enraged.
 ' This do, for not unwise thou seem'st to be ;
 ' Thy garments doff, and for the winds to toss
 ' The raft abandon, swimming with thine hands.

‘ Seek to arrive on the Phæacian shore,
‘ Where it is fated that thou shalt escape. 345
‘ Come, this ambrosial fillet take and bind
‘ Beneath thy breast, and fear not pain nor death.
‘ When the firm earth thou graspest with thine hands,
‘ Unbind and cast it in the gloomy sea
‘ Far from the land, and turn thyself away.’ 350

Thus spake the Goddess, and the fillet gave ;
And like a sea-gull ’neath the foaming wave
She plunged, and her the gloomy sea concealed.
Patient Ulysses, god-like man, took thought,
And, troubled, thus his mighty heart addressed : 355
‘ Alas ! O may not some one of the Gods
‘ Be planning a deceit against me here,
‘ When from the raft she bids me to depart !
‘ I’d better not obey ; for with mine eyes
‘ I’ve seen the land to which she bids me flee.
‘ But this I’ll do, for thus it seems the best : 360
‘ Long as the planks shall to the joints adhere,
‘ So long I’ll stay and patiently endure.
‘ But when the wave has broken up the raft,
‘ Then will I swim ; there is no better plan.’

While thus he meditated in his mind, 365
Earth-shaking Neptune drove a mighty wave,
Horrid, o’erwhelming, fierce ; and struck him down,
As when a rushing wind disturbs a heap
Of withered husks, and scatters here and there,
So scattered he the planks. Ulysses then 370
Strode on a plank, as riding on a horse.
He doffed the garments which Calypso gave,
And braced the fillet underneath his breast ;

Fell headlong in the sea, and stretched his hands,
Eager to swim. When him king Neptune saw, 375
Shaking his head thus to himself he said :

‘Go, suff’ring man ! now wander o’er the sea,
‘Till thou hast mingled with the Jove-sprung men ;
‘Nor will thy sorrows so, I hope, be light.’

Thus having said, he lashed his fair-haired steeds, 380
And went to Ægæ where his famed house is.
Minerva, child of Jove, had other thoughts ;
She stayed the courses of the other winds,
And bid them all to cease and to repose.

Swift Boreas she roused ; but broke the waves 385
Until divine Ulysses should consort

(With the Phæacians, men who take delight
In rowing, having death and fate escaped.

Two days, two nights, upon the swollen wave
He strayed, and much his heart foreboded death :
But when fair-haired Aurora closed the third, 390
Then ceased the wind to blow : a breathless calm
Came on, and he the neighb’ring land descried,
Acutely gazing, lifted on a wave.

As to his children seems a father’s life
Welcome, when lying in some sore disease
He wastes away, while cruel fate attacks, 395

And the Gods make him welcome, freed from pain ;
So welcome to Ulysses land and wood
Appeared, and eager to the shore he swam.

When he was distant as a man can shout, 400
He heard the sound of waves against the rocks.

A great wave roaring broke upon the shore
With violence, and all was wrapt in foam.

No harbour there, a refuge for the ships,
 No shelter ; all was rocks and crags and cliffs. 405
 Then were Ulysses' heart and knees unstrung,
 And troubled to his own brave mind he said :
 ' Ah me ! though Jove has granted me to see
 ' The land unhoped for, and successfully
 ' I've cut my way through this abyss, yet still
 ' From the white billows no escape appears. 410
 ' Sharp crags in front ; a wave that roars around ;
 ' And a sheer precipice runs up above.
 ' The sea is all around ; nor is there place
 ' For both my feet to stand and woe escape.
 ' May the great wave not dash me on the crag 415
 ' When landing ! dreadful would my struggle be.
 ' Should I swim further on and find a shore
 ' And shelt'ring rocks projecting from the sea,
 ' I fear the ebb may hurry me away,
 ' And bear me groaning to the fishy sea ; 420
 ' Or a sea-monster from the deep some God
 ' May send, for many Amphitritè breeds ;
 ' And Neptune with me is, I know, enraged.'

While this he thought of in his heart and mind,
 A great wave bore him on the rocky shore. 425
 Torn would his skin, his bones have broken been,
 But that Minerva gave his mind a thought. *She thought this*
 Struggling with both his hands he clutched the rock,
 And groaning held it till the wave had past ;
 And so he shunned it ; but when flowing back 430
 It struck and bore him struggling out to sea.
 As from its cell a polypus is torn,
 And stones are firmly by its suckers grasped ;

So by the rocks from off his stalwart hand.
The skin was torn, and o'er him came a wave. 435
And surely there, though contrary to fate,
Unfortunate Ulysses would have died,
Had not Minerva given him calm thought.
Emerging from the wave which lashed the shore
He swam aside, still looking to the land,
If either sloping shore or jutting rock 440
He could discern, a refuge from the sea.
When a fair-flowing river's mouth he reached
By swimming, there the place appeared the best,
As free from rock and sheltered from the wind.
The flowing stream he recognised, and prayed :
'Hear me, O king! whoever thou mayst be.
'Beseeching thee with many pray'rs, I come, 445
'Flying the threats of Neptune, from the sea.
'He is respected, even by the Gods,
'Whoe'er he be that comes a wanderer,
'As to thy stream and knees I suffering come.
'Have pity, king! thy suppliant I am.' 450

He spake: and he forthwith the stream restrained,
Kept back his waves, and made a calm in front,
And saved him at the outlet of the flood.
He let his knees and stalwart hands droop down,
For his dear heart was conquered by the sea.
His flesh was swollen, and sea-water welled 455
Forth from his mouth and nostrils; and he lay
Breathless and voiceless, fainting with fatigue.
But when again he breathed and sense returned,
The fillet of the Goddess from his breast
He loosed, and cast it in the sea-mixt stream, 460

And a great wave conveyed it down the flood,
Where Ino quickly took it in her hands.

He from the river hasting bent him down
Upon the sedge, and kissed the fertile ground,
And, troubled, to his own brave mind he said :

‘ O how I suffer ! what will come at last ? 465

‘ If in the stream the painful night I watch,

‘ Hoar frost and cold dew may together quench

‘ My little life now fainting with fatigue ;

‘ Cold blows the river’s breeze before the dawn.

‘ But if the bank I climb, and fall asleep 470

‘ In the thick bushes of the shady grove,

‘ Though cold and weariness may leave me free,

‘ And sweet sleep come upon me, yet I fear

‘ Lest of wild beasts I should become the prey.’

This as he meditated seemed the best ;

And to the grove he went ; he found it near 475

The water, in an open space, and came

Upon two shrubs, both springing from one stem,

This of the mastic, that the olive-tree.

Through them nor blows the force of wat’ry winds ;

Nor strikes the sun when shining with its rays,

Nor penetrates the rain ; so thick they grow, 480

Each with the other’s branches intertwined.

Ulysses crept beneath, and with his hands

Piled the wide couch ; for there abundantly

Were shed of leaves as many as might well

Two men or three protect in time of storm,

However it might furiously rage. 485

Divine Ulysses saw it and rejoiced,

Lay down, and o’er him heaped a pile of leaves.

As in black ashes when one hides a brand
 In a field's corner, with no neighbours by,
 Saving the seed of fire, that so no more
 He elsewhere may have need to kindle it; 490
 Divine Ulysses so within the leaves
 Concealed himself. Minerva on his eyes
 Poured sleep, that she might quickly give him rest
 From his hard labour, and his eye-lids close.

BOOK VI.

THUS there long-suffering Ulysses slept,
 Subdued by sleep and toil. Minerva sought
 The realm and town of the Phæacians,
 Who dwelt of yore in wide Hyperia,
 Near the Cyclôpes, over-weening men, *cl. my.* 5
 Who plundered them and far excelled in strength.
 God-like Nausithöus removed them thence
 And placed in Scheria, far from wand'ring men;
 The city fortified and houses built;
 Made temples to the Gods and lands assigned. 10
 But when by fate to Hades he had gone,
 Alcinous, by Gods instructed, reigned.
 Blue-eyed Minerva to his house now came,
 Of brave Ulysses planning the return.
 Into the chamber, wrought with art, she went 15
 Where slept a damsel, like the Goddesses
 In countenance and form, Nausicaa,
 The daughter of the brave Alcinous.

By her two maids, who from the Graces had
 Their beauty, on each side the door-posts lay,
 And brightly-shining portals shut them in.
 She to the damsel's couch, like breath of air, 20
 Came gliding in, and, standing o'er her head,
 Addressed her, putting on herself the form
 Of Dymas' daughter, famed for seamanship ;
 Of like age to herself and much beloved.
 Blue-eyed Minerva in her form thus spake :
 ' Why did thy mother bear thee indolent, 25
 ' Nausicaa ? thy shining garments lie
 ' Uncared for ; yet thy marriage is at hand,
 ' When thou must clothe thyself in vestments fair,
 ' And give them too to those who lead thee forth.
 ' Thus among men will good report be spread,
 ' And sire and honoured mother will rejoice. 30
 ' But let us go to wash when dawn appears ;
 ' And I, thy fellow-spinster, will attend,
 ' That thou mayst quickly preparation make ;
 ' For 'tis not long that thou'lt a maiden be.
 ' E'en now the chiefs of the Phæacian men,
 ' Whence springs thine own race, woo thee as their
 bride. 35
 ' Come, urge thy noble father, ere the dawn,
 ' Appears, the mules and chariot to prepare,
 ' Which girdles, vests, and carpets may convey.
 ' 'Twill for thyself be better than to go
 ' On foot ; for distant are the washing pits.' 40
 Blue-eyed Minerva spoke and went away
 [T' Olympus where, they say, the Gods' abode
 Is ever safe, nor shaken by the winds,

Nor wet with rain; nor does the snow approach.
 A cloudless ether ever floats above,
 And spotless splendour overspreads the sky. 45
 There all day long the Gods rejoice, and there,
 When she had told the damsel, Pallas went].
 Forthwith Aurora, from her beauteous throne
 Arising, woke the fair Nausicaa.

She wondered at the dream, and through the house
 Hastened to tell it to her parents dear, 50

Father and mother: them she found within.

She by the hearth was sitting with her maids,
 Reeling the purple yarn; but him she met
 Going abroad to council with the chiefs,
 Where the illustrious Phæacians called. 55

Near her dear father standing thus she spoke:

‘Dear father! couldst thou not prepare for me
 ‘The lofty well-wheeled car, that I may take
 ‘The beauteous vestments to the stream to wash;
 ‘They are not pure, and ’tis but right that thou, 60
 ‘In council with the chiefs, fresh clothes shouldst wear.

And thou hast five dear sons within the house;

‘Two of them husbands, three young bachelors:

‘When to the dance they go they always wish

‘For new-washed vests; and these are in my charge.’

Thus said she to her sire; she shamed to speak 65

Of marriage; but he understood it all,

And answered: ‘Neither mules I grudge thee, child!

‘Nor anything: go, and the servants shall

‘The lofty well-wheeled chariot prepare,

‘Fitted with platform to convey the vests.’ 70

He gave the servants order; they obeyed.

Maudslayi modestly

And out of doors the well-wheeled car prepared,
And brought the mules and bound them to the yoke.
The damsel from the chamber brought the vests,
And laid them shining on the well-wrought car. 75
Her mother in a basket pleasant food
Of various kinds bestowed, and poured out wine
In goat-skin bag: (the damsel climbed the car).
The liquid oil in golden flask she gave,
That with her maids she might herself anoint. 80
The whip and shining reins she took, and urged
The mules to go; their trampling sounded far. *Cleanse*
Steady they drew, and bore the vests and her;
But not alone, for with her ran the maids.
When to the river's beauteous bank they came, 85
There were the washing pits in full supply,
And much fair water ever overflowed
To cleanse the vests, however soiled they were.
Then from the yoke they let the mules go free,
And drove them by the river's rippling stream
On the sweet grass to feed; and from the car 90
They took the garments in their hands, and poured
Pure water on, and stamped in rivalry.
When they had washed them and all stains removed,
They spread them out in order on the shore,
Where most the sea rolled pebbles on the beach. 95
Then, having bathed and rubbed the rich oil on,
They took their meal beside the river's bank,
And in the sun-beams left the vests to dry.
When maids and she with food were satisfied,
They played at ball, and threw their kerchiefs off. 100
White-armed Nausicaa began the game.

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As when the archeress Diana goes
 On Erymanthus or Táygetum,
 Charmed with the chase of boars and rapid deer ;
 Nymphs, sprung from ægis-bearing Jove, with her 105
 Sport o'er the fields : Latona joys to see
 How she excels them all in form and face,
 Distinguished easily ; yet all are fair :
 So the pure virgin shone among her maids.
 But homeward when she was about to go, 110
 Yoking the mules and folding up the vests,
 Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts ;
 That now Ulysses should from sleep awake,
 And see the lovely maiden ; and that she
Should be his guide to the Phæacian town.
 As to a maid the princess threw the ball 115
 It missed the maid, and in a deep pool fell.
 They loudly wailed. Divine Ulysses woke,
 And sitting pondered in his mind and thought :
 ' Ah me ! to what men's country am I come ?
 ' Are they unruly, savage, and unjust,
 ' Or kind to strangers and of mind devout ? 120
 ' The female voice of damsels round me comes
 ' [Of nymphs who dwell upon the mountain-tops,
 ' By rivers' sources or in grassy meads].
 ' Am I near those who speak with human voice ? 125
 ' But I will trial make myself and see.'

Thus speaking from the copse Ulysses came,
 And with strong hands a leafy bough he broke
 From the thick wood, his person to conceal.
 He went as goes a lion in his strength, 130
 Bred on the mountains, spite of wind and rain ;

His eyes are glaring ; and he goes among
Cows, ewes, or deer, while hunger drives him on
The thickly-peopled sheep-fold to attack.
So 'mong the maidens, naked as he was, 135
Ulysses dared to go, for sore his need ;
Dreadful he seemed to them, besmeared with brine.
To the high banks confusedly they ran
Alarmed ; the daughter of Alcinous
Alone remained ; Minerva to her mind
Gave strength, and terror from her limbs removed. 140
Checking herself from flight she fronted him :

Ulysses doubted whether suppliant
He should embrace the lovely damsel's knees,
Or, at a distance, standing as he was,
Entreat with honeyed words that she would show
Where lay the city and would clothing give.
This, as he meditated, seemed the best ; 145
To stand apart and pray with honeyed words,
Lest she be angry should he touch her knees.
Forthwith he made this honeyed artful speech.

‘ I supplicate thee, Queen ! if Goddess thou
‘ Or mortal art. If Goddess, and of those 150
‘ Who in the wide sky dwell, thou art, I deem,
‘ Like to Diana, daughter of great Jove ;
‘ Like her in stature, form and countenance.
‘ If thou of mortals art who dwell on earth,
‘ Thrice happy are thy mother and thy sire ;
‘ Thrice happy are thy brothers ; for their mind 155
‘ Is charmed with loveliness for thy dear sake,
‘ When such a flowret in the dance they see.
‘ But happiest is he above the rest

- ' Who loads with bridal gifts and takes thee home.
 ' Such mortal never have these eyes beheld, 160
 ' Woman or man : I wonder as I gaze.
 ' Yet once at Delos, by Apollo's shrine,
 ' Such a young palm-tree springing-up I saw.
 ' Thither I went, and many followed me
 - ' Along a road where griefs were doomed to come. 165
 ' Still as I gazed I wondered in my mind
 ' For never from the earth did such tree spring.
 ' Thus, lady ! thee I wond'ringly admire,
 ' And fear exceedingly to touch thy knees :
 ' For dreadful sorrow has upon me come.
 ' I yestere'en, upon the twentieth day, 170
 ' Escaped the gloomy sea. The waves and storms
 ' Drove me so long from the Ogygian isle.
 ' And now the Deity has cast me here,
 ' That here too I may suffer ; for I think
 ' He will not cease ; the Gods have much in store.
 ' But, Queen ! have pity ; for to thee the first, 175
 ' After my many sufferings, I come ;
 ' Nor know I who this town and land possess.
 ' Show me the town, and deign some clothes to give,
 ' If some torn wrapper thou hast with thee here ;
 ' So may the Gods grant all thy mind desires, 180
 ' Husband and home and harmony bestow !
 ' For nothing better can there be than this,
 ' That man and wife should with harmonious thought
 ' Dwell in their home ; vexation to their foes,
 ' Joy to their friends, and chiefly to themselves.' 185
- White armed Nausicaa to him replied :
- ' Stranger ! thou seemest nor unwise nor mean ;

I read of comen foot blame

‘ (Olympian Jove good fortune gives to men,
 ‘ To good and bad, to each one as he wills :
 ‘ What he has giv’n to thee thou must endure), 190
 ‘ Since at our town and land thou hast arrived,
 ‘ Nor garments shalt thou want, nor anything
 ‘ Which a long-suff’ring suppliant should have.
 ‘ The town I’ll show and tell the people’s name.
 ‘ This town and country the Phæacians have, 195
 ‘ And I am child of brave Alcinous,
 ‘ On whom Phæacian pow’r and strength depend.’

She spake, and ordered thus her fair-haired maids :

‘ Stay, maidens ! (whither when a man ye see
 ‘ Thus fly ye ? think ye he’s an enemy ? 200
 ‘ No man is this,) no living man could be,
 ‘ Who to the land of the Phæacians comes
 ‘ With war, for they are by the Gods beloved,
 ‘ And far apart, within a storm-tossed sea,
 ‘ We dwell, and others do not mix with us. 205
 ‘ (Hither this wretched wand’ring man is come,
 ‘ And we must tend him.) Strangers, beggars, all
 ‘ Are Jove’s ; the gift is welcome though but small.
 ‘ But, maidens ! give the stranger meat and drink,
 ‘ And bathe him where is shelter from the wind.’ 210

She spake : they standing each encouraged each,
 And took Ulysses under shelter, where
 Nausicaa, of brave Alcinous

The daughter, bade them ; placed a cloak and vest ;
 Gave in a golden flask the liquid oil, 215
 And bade him in the river’s stream to bathe.
 Then to the maidens thus Ulysses spake :
 ‘ Ye maidens ! stand apart that I myself

‘ May from my shoulders wash the brine, and rub
‘ The oil, to which my skin is long unused. 220
‘ I could not in your presence bathe, ashamed
‘ Naked among you fair-haired maids to go.’

He spake : retiring they the damsel told.

He in the river washed from off his skin
The brine which to his back and shoulders clung, 225
And wiped the barren sea’s foam from his head.
When he had bathed, and rubbed himself with oil,
And donned the garments which the virgin gave,
Minerva, Jove-descended, made him seem
Greater and more majestic ; down his head 230
Let the crisp hyacinthine hair descend.

As gold a skilful man on silver spreads,
(Whom Vulcan and Minerva taught the art
Of varied kind) and beauteous works completes,
So on his head and shoulders grace she poured. 235
On the sea-shore he sat apart, with grace
And beauty bright ; the maid admiring gazed.
Then to the fair-haired maidens thus she spake :

‘ Hear me, ye white-armed maidens ! while I speak.
‘ Not ’gainst the will of all th’ Olympian Gods 240
‘ To the divine Phæacians this man comes.
‘ He was at first unseemly in my sight,
‘ But now is like the Gods in heav’n who dwell.
‘ Would such a husband were designed for me,
‘ That he would dwell here and be pleased to stay ! 245
‘ But, maidens ! give the stranger food and drink.’

They heard, and with alacrity obeyed ;
And to Ulysses food and drink supplied.
Long-suffering Ulysses ate and drank

Freely ; 'twas long since he had tasted food. 250
White-armed Nausicaa had other thoughts :
Folding the vests she placed them on the car,
Yoked the swift mules, the chariot climbed herself ;
Summoned Ulysses, and addressed him thus :
' Now, stranger ! rise and to the city go, 255
' That to my valiant father's house I may
' Conduct thee : there, I tell thee, thou wilt see
' Of the Phæacians all the chiefest men.
' But specially do this—thou seemest wise—
' While we are going through the fields and farms,
' So long, quick following the mules and car, 260
' Go with the maids, and I will lead the way.
' When to the town we come—around it are
' A lofty battlement and harbour fair
' On either side, and narrow the approach ;
' For ships impelled by oars enclose the way,
' And for each man there is a mooring-place. 265
' The forum, walled with quarried deep-dug stones,
' The temple fair of Neptune here surrounds ;
' And here they store their naval armaments,
' The ropes and sails ; and here they plane the oars.
' Phæacians nor for bow nor quiver care ; 270
' But they delight in masts, and oars, and ships,
' And in them go across the white-waved sea.
' I shun to give of them a bad report,
' Lest any one reproach me afterwards.
' There are among them men unscrupulous ;
' And of the baser sort some one might say: 275
' " What stranger large and handsome follows now
' " Nausicaa ? Where found she him ? No doubt

“ He’ll be her husband : she has pick’d him up,
“ A vagabond, from some outlandish ship ;
“ As if, forsooth, there were not such men near !
“ Or some God, answ’ring her frequent pray’rs, 280
“ Is come from heav’n to keep her all her days.
“ ’Tis better she should go herself and find
“ A husband of some other race, since she
“ Despises the Phæacians of the land,
“ Many and good, who woo her for their bride.” *Slander!*
“ So will they say, and such their slander be ; 285
“ And any other maiden I should blame
“ Who did such deeds, or who against the will
“ Of father and of mother should consort
“ With men before a public marriage came.
“ Now, stranger ! heed me, that thou quickly mayst 290
“ Gain from my father convoy and return.
“ Minerva’s shining grove of poplar trees
“ Thou wilt discover near the road, wherein
“ A fountain springs, and meadows lie around.
“ There, too, my father’s grounds and garden are,
“ Far from the city as a man can shout.
“ There sit and wait a while till we shall go 295
“ Into the city to my father’s house.
“ But when thou thinkest we’ve arrived at home,
“ Then enter the Phæacian town, and seek
“ The house of my brave sire, Alcinous :
“ ’Tis easy to be known, and e’en a child 300
“ Would lead thee to it ; for in no respect
“ Are the Phæacian houses built as that,
“ The house of brave Alcinous. But when
“ The house and court conceal thee, quickly go

‘ Across the hall till thou my mother reach ; 305
 ‘ Upon the hearth, close by the fire, she sits,
 ‘ Reeling the purple yarn, a sight to see !
 ‘ Close to a column, and the maids behind :
 ‘ Against it is upreared my father’s throne,
 ‘ Where, like a God, he sits and drinks his wine.
 ‘ Passing him by, upon my mother’s knees 310
 ‘ Lay thou thine hands, that thy returning-day,
 ‘ Though far from home, thou mayst rejoicing see.
 ‘ [If she is friendly to thee in her mind,
 ‘ Then there is hope that thou mayst see thy friends,
 ‘ Go to thy home and thy paternal land.]’ 315

Thus speaking, with her shining whip she urged
 The mules, which quickly left the river’s bank,
 And well they tramped, and well threw out their feet.
 She driving, that Ulysses and the maids
 On foot might follow, wisely used the whip. 320
 The sun was setting ; to Minerva’s grove
 They came, and there divine Ulysses sate.
 Then to the daughter of great Jove he prayed :
 ‘ Unconquered child of ægis-bearing Jove !
 ‘ Hear me, hear now at least, though formerly 325
 ‘ Thou didst not hear me in my great distress,
 ‘ Whom the famed shaker of the earth distressed.
 ‘ Grant me that I to the Phæacians
 ‘ Object of love and pity may have come !’

He spake in pray’r, and him Minerva heard,
 But did not face to face appear, because
 She feared her brother who was much enraged 330
 Against Ulysses ere he reached his home.

BOOK VII.

WHILE thus long-suff'ring Ulysses prayed,
The strong mules bore the damsel to the town.
When to her father's famous house she came
She stayed them at the porch. Around her stood
Her brothers, men like to th' immortal Gods, 5
Unyoked the mules, and brought the vestments in.
She to her chamber went ; an ancient dame,
Eurymedusa, an Aperiau, 10
Kindled a fire. Her once the well-oared ships
Brought from Aperia, whom they chose a prize
For king Alcinous, because he ruled
O'er the Phæacians, honoured as a God :
She in the house Nausicaa had nursed.
The fire she kindled and the supper served.
Ulysses hasted to the town to go :
Minerva round him pour'd, with loving care, 15
A mist, lest some Phæacian should meet
And insolently ask him who he was.
As he was entering the pleasant town,
Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, met him there,
Like a young virgin who a pitcher bore, 20
And fronted him. Ulysses questioned her :
' Child ! couldst thou lead me to the house of one
' Alcinous, who o'er this people rules ?
' For I, a suff'ring stranger, here am come
' From a far distant land, and therefore know 25
' None of the men who own this town and land.'
Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, answered him :

‘ Yes, reverend stranger ! I will show the house
‘ Thou askest for ; he near my father dwells.
‘ But go in silence, I will lead the way, 30
‘ And look not at nor question any one ;
‘ For these men have for strangers no respect,
‘ Nor treat him kindly who has come from far.
‘ They, trusting in their swiftly-sailing ships,
‘ Cross the deep sea, for Neptune gives them this, 35
‘ And swift their ships are as a wing or thought.’

Pallas Minerva spake, and swiftly led
The way, while in the Goddess’ steps he went.
The ship-renowned Phæacians saw him not
Walking throughout the town. The Goddess dread, 40
Fair-haired Minerva, did not this permit.
She kindly poured a mist divine around.
Ulysses wondered at the ports and ships,
The chieftains’ council-courts, the lofty walls
Fitted with buttresses, a sight to see ! 45
But to the king’s famed palace when they came
Blue-eyed Minerva thus began to say :
‘ That, reverend stranger ! is the house for which
‘ Thou askest : princes feasting there thou’lt meet ;
‘ But go thou in, and fear not in thy mind. 50
‘ A brave man ever is superior
‘ In deeds, from wheresoever he may come.
‘ First thou wilt find the mistress in the house ;
‘ Arêtè is her name ; from ancestor
‘ The same as to Alcinous gave birth. 55
‘ First Neptune, shaker of the earth, begat
‘ Nausithous, whose mother, of her sex
‘ The fairest, Peribœa, youngest child

‘ Was of magnanimous Eurymedon,
‘ Who of the haughty giants once was king.
‘ He their proud race destroyed, and died himself. 60
‘ Neptune, with her as concubine, begat
‘ Nausithous, who the Phæacians ruled.
‘ Nausithous begat Rhexēnor and
‘ Alcinous. The first, who had no son,
‘ Apollo of the silver bow struck down
‘ While yet a bridegroom, who one daughter left, 65
‘ Arētè, whom Alcinous espoused
‘ And honoured as not any other wife
‘ On earth is honoured, many as there are,
‘ Who with their husbands occupy a home.
‘ She in such honour heartily is held
‘ By her dear children, and Alcinous, 70
‘ And all the people, who, regarding her
‘ As though she were a Goddess, courteously
‘ Address her as she passes through the town.
‘ She lacks not wisdom, nor aught else that’s good,
‘ And kindly wives with husbands reconciles.
‘ If she is friendly to thee in her mind, 75
‘ Then there is hope that thou mayst see thy friends,
‘ Go to thine home and thy paternal land.’

Blue-eyed Minerva spake, and went away
Across the sea, and lovely Scheria left.
To Marathon and Athens, with wide streets, 80
She came, and went Erectheus’ house within.
But to the palace of Alcinous
Ulysses came, and much his heart was moved.
There paused he ere he to the threshold went ;
A ray, as though it were of sun or moon,

Was on the high house of Alcinous. 85
 Two walls of brass extended here and there
 From threshold to the inner room's recess,
 And a bronze cornice was around : the doors
 Of gold the well-compacted house enclosed.
 Columns of silver stood on floor of brass ; 90
 Silver the lintel and the ring of gold.
 On each side dogs of gold and silver were,
 Which Vulcan with his skilful art had forged
 To guard the house of brave Alcinous,
 [Which are immortal, never growing old].
 Thrones here and there were fix'd around the walls 95
 From threshold to recess, and vestments there,
 Fine and well woven, women's works, were laid.
 There the Phæacian princes used to sit,
 Drinking and eating with a full supply.
 Boys made of gold by well-built altars stood, 100
 Upholding flaming torches in their hands,
 Lighting the night to those who feasted there.
 And fifty serving-women in the house ;
 Some in the hand-mills grind the yellow corn,
 Some weave the webs, and some the spindles turn, 105
 Sitting like leaves of the tall poplar tree ;
 And from the woven cloth moist oil drops down.
 As the Phæacians other men excel
 In sailing o'er the sea, the women so
 Excel in weaving webs : Minerva gives 110
 Knowledge of beauteous works and skilful minds.
 Outside the palace, near the portal, lies
 A spacious orchard o'er four acres spread,
 And on both sides of it a wall extends.

Trees, lofty, flourishing, are growing there ;
 The pears, pomegranates, and the apple-trees, 115
 With shining fruit, sweet figs, and olives grow.
 The fruit of these nor perishes nor fails,
 Winter or summer, lasting through the year :
 The ever-breathing Zephyr others brings,
 And ripens them. (Near pear, the pear grows old ; 120
 Near apple, apple ; near the grape, the grape ;
 Fig near the fig : the many-fruited ground
 Is planted there ; part on a level plain
 Is heated by the sun ; they gather grapes .
 In this part, and in that the vintage crush.
 There the green bunches shed their early bloom, 125
 And others just begin to change their hue.
 Well-ordered borders in the furthest plot,
 Of varied growth, perpetually shine.
 There are two fountains ; one its water spreads
 O'er all the garden, and the other flows
 Beneath the threshold to the lofty house, 130
 And thence the citizens the water draw.)
 Such were the Gods' gifts to Alcinous.
 There paused divine Ulysses wond'ringly :
 When in his mind he had admired it all,
 He o'er the threshold quickly passed and went 135
 The house within, and there the princes found
 Of the Phæacians, pouring from their cups
 Libations to clear-sighted Mercury,
 Made last to him before they went to rest,
 But through the hall divine Ulysses went,
 With cloud around him which Minerva poured, 140
 Till to Arêtè and Alcinous

He came, and on Arêtè's knees he placed
 His hands, and then the God-sent cloud dispersed.
 They sate in silence when they saw the man,
 And wondered as they gazed. Ulysses prayed 145
 'Arêtè! from divine Rhexēnor sprung!
 'Both to thy husband and thy knees I come,
 'And to those feasting here, a suff'ring man,
 'May the Gods grant them happily to live,
 'And to their children each transmit their wealth,
 'And honour which to them the people give! 150
 'But grant me speedily a convoy home,
 'For from my friends afar I suffer woes.'

He spake, and took his seat upon the hearth
 Among the ashes, while all held their peace.
 At last the aged Echinēus spake, 155
 The oldest man of the Phæacians,
 Who was adorned with eloquence, and knew
 Many old deeds: he kindly them addressed:
 'Alcinous! it is not good nor right
 'That thus a stranger should upon the hearth 160
 'In ashes sit: thy friends their speech restrain
 'Awaiting thine: then raise the stranger up,
 'And place him on a silver-studded throne.
 'Command thy heralds that they mix fresh wine,
 'That our libations we may make to Jove
 'The thunderer, who sacred strangers guards; 165
 'And to the stranger let the house-keeper
 'Give of such viands as there are, a feast.'

When holy King Alcinous heard this,
 He took the wise Ulysses by the hand,
 Raised from the hearth and on a shining throne

Made him to sit, displacing his own son, 170
Who near him sate and whom he dearly loved,
The brave Laodomas. A maiden brought,
And from a beauteous golden ewer filled,
A bowl above a silver cauldron placed,
To wash, and spread a polished table near.
The venerable house-keeper brought food, 175
And divers cates, such as there were, heaped up.
Divine Ulysses ate and drank, and then
Alcinous addressed the herald thus :
' Pontonous ! a bowl of sweet wine mix
' For all within the house, that so to Jove 180
' The thunderer we may libations make,
' Who venerable suppliants protects.'

He spake : Pontonous the sweet wine mixed,
And in the cups distributed to all.
When they had made libation, and had drunk
All their mind wished, Alcinous thus spoke : 185
' Hear me, ye chiefs of the Phæacians !
' While what my mind persuades me I shall say.
' Now having feasted go ye home to sleep,
' And in the morning we the senators
' Will summon, on the stranger to bestow
' Our hospitality, and to the Gods 190
' Will offer sacrifice, and then consult
' About a convoy, that the stranger may,
' From labour and affliction free, return
' Rejoicing quickly to his native land,
' Under our convoy, though far off it be,
' Nor in the meantime suffer grief and woe 195
' Ere he reach home : when there, he will endure

' Whatever destiny and fates severe
 ' Span with their thread when him his mother bare.
 ' If he immortal does from heav'n descend,
 ' Something beyond their wont the Gods devise ; 200
 ' For always hitherto the Gods appear
 ' Without disguise, when famous hecatombs
 ' We make, and sitting with us feast as we.
 ' If one a lonely wayfarer should come,
 ' They hide it not, for we are kin to them, 205
 ' As are the Cyclops' and fierce giant tribes.'

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

' Alcinous ! let other thoughts be thine.
 ' I nor in form nor force am like the Gods
 ' Who dwell in heav'n, but am to mortal men. 210
 ' Whatever men most wretched ye have known,
 ' To them in suff'ring I compare myself ;
 ' And I could tell of evils greater still
 ' Which by the impulse of the Gods I bore.
 ' But leave me to my meal, however grieved ; 215
 ' For nothing than a craving appetite
 ' Is more audacious ; it compels regard
 ' From the vexed man with sorrow in his soul,
 ' (As sorrow in my soul indeed I have)
 ' For it obliges me to eat and drink, 220
 ' Makes me forget my suff'rings, bids me feast.
 ' But with the dawn appearing rise ye up
 ' That in my country miserable me,
 ' Who all these woes have suffered, ye may place.
 ' I would that life might leave me when I've seen
 ' My lands, my servants and my high-roofed house.' 225
 He spake : they all assented and decreed

Pleasure of eating

To send the guest, who well had spoken, home.
When they had made libation, and had drunk
All that they wished, they homeward went to sleep.
Divine Ulysses in the hall was left : 230

Arete and Alcinous sate near :

The servants cleared the fragments of the feast.
White-armed Arete then began a speech,
For she the cloak, the tunic and the vests
Had, when she saw them, recognised, which she
Herself had with the female servants made. 235

Addressing him she spake these winged words :

‘ Stranger ! I first will question thee myself.
‘ Who and whence art thou ? who these garments gave ?
‘ Said’st thou that thou hadst wandered o’er the sea ?’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said : 240

‘ ’Tis hard, O queen ! to tell my woes at length ;
‘ So many are there which the Gods have caused.
‘ But what thou askest of me I will tell.

‘ A certain island, called Ogygia,
‘ Lies in the distant sea : Calypso there, 245

‘ Of Atlas fair-haired crafty daughter, dwells ;
‘ A dreadful Goddess ; no one of the Gods
‘ Or mortal men with her holds intercourse.
‘ Me only wretched to her hearth the God
‘ Conveyed, when with his shining thunder-bolt
‘ Jove in the mid-sea struck and wrecked my ship. 250

‘ There all my other brave companions died ;
‘ But seizing with my arms the vessel’s keel
‘ Nine days I drifted ; on the tenth black night
‘ The Gods impelled me on th’ Ogygian isle,
‘ Where fair Calypso, dreadful Goddess, dwells,

- ‘ Who took and kindly treated me and fed, 255
‘ And often said that she would render me
‘ Immortal, all my days from old age free ;
‘ But never did my heart and mind persuade.
‘ For seven long years I there immoveably
‘ Remained, and ever moistened with my tears 260
‘ Th’ ambrosial garments which Calypso gave.
‘ But when the eighth revolving year was come,
‘ She urged and bade me to go home, for Jove
‘ Had sent a message, or her mind was changed.
‘ She sent me on a well-built raft, and gave
‘ Food, wine, and clothed me with ambrosial vests, 265
‘ And made a fav’ring gentle-breeze to blow.
‘ For seventeen days I sailed along the sea ;
‘ On the eighteenth appeared the shady hills
‘ Of this your land, whereat my heart rejoiced,
‘ A luckless man ; for I was still to meet 270
‘ With suff’rings which earth-shaking Neptune sent,
‘ Who on me urged the winds, and stopped my course,
‘ Stirred the vast sea ; nor did the wave allow
‘ Me wretched to be carried on the raft.
‘ Then the storm wrecked it ; but I swam across 275
‘ The sea’s deep gulf, until the wind and wave
‘ Bore me along and brought me to your land.
‘ The wave would then have forced me on the shore
‘ Emerging from the sea, and would have dashed
‘ Upon great rocks, a joyless landing-place ;
‘ But I retreating swam until I reached 280
‘ The river ; there the place appeared the best,
‘ Free from the rocks with shelter from the wind.
‘ Reviving I escaped, and night came on.

' I from the stream divine retreating lay
 ' Among the shrubs ; upon me leaves I heaped, 285
 ' And endless sleep the God upon me poured.
 ' There mid the leaves, afflicted in my heart,
 ' All night I slept till morning and mid-day.
 ' The sun declined and sweet sleep left me there.
 ' Then on the shore I heard thy daughter's maids 290
 ' Disporting ; she herself among them was
 ' Like to the Goddesses ; to her I prayed.
 ' Of sound discretion she had no defect :
 ' Thou never couldst have hoped that one so young
 ' Would act like her ; the young are seldom wise.
 ' She gave me food enough, and sparkling wine ; 295
 ' In the stream bathed me, and these vests bestowed.
 ' I, miserable man, thus tell the truth.'

To him Alcinous replied and said :

' Stranger ! in this my daughter judged not well :
 ' She did not with her maidens to our house 300
 ' Bring thee, though her thou first didst supplicate.'

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

' Hero ! thy blameless daughter do not chide
 ' For me ; she bade me follow with the maids :
 ' But timid and ashamed I would not go, 305
 ' Lest when thou saw'st me thou shouldst angry be ;
 ' We tribes of men on earth are prone to wrath.'

To him Alcinous replied and said :

' Stranger ! not such my heart as causelessly
 ' Is angry : moderation is the best. 310
 ' O father Jove ! Minerva ! Phœbus ! would
 ' Such a man as thou art, thinking like myself,
 ' Might wed my child and be my son-in-law,'

‘ Here staying ; house and wealth I would bestow
 ‘ If thou wouldst stay ; but no Phæacian will 315
 ‘ Keep thee against thy wish ; this Jove forbid !
 ‘ A convoy I to-morrow will appoint
 ‘ (That thou mayst know) ; but now, subdued by sleep,
 ‘ Repose till then, and they shall sail a ship
 ‘ O’er the calm sea, that to thy native land
 ‘ And home, and where thou wilt, thou mayst go,
 ‘ Though it more distant than Eubœa be, 320
 ‘ Most distant, as our countrymen report
 ‘ Who saw it, when they Rhadamanthus took
 ‘ To visit Tityos, the son of earth ;
 ‘ And thither went they ; and without fatigue 325
 ‘ On the same day performed their voyage home.
 ‘ Thou’lt see thyself how much my ships and men
 ‘ Excel, who with their oar-blades turn the sea.’

Patient Ulysses at his words rejoiced,
 And with a pray’r addressed them thus and said: 330
 ‘ O father Jove ! grant that Alcinous
 ‘ All that he says may do. His glory great
 ‘ On earth would be, and I should reach my home.’

Such words they thus to one another spake.
 Arete bade the white-armed maidens place 335
 A bed beneath the porch, and purple quilts
 To lay thereon, and carpets o’er them spread,
 And coverlids of wool above them all.
 They, bearing torches in their hands, came forth.
 When with alacrity they’d spread the couch, 340
 Ulysses they invited with these words :

‘ Rise, stranger ! and repose : thy bed’s prepared.’
 They spake : it pleased him much to seek repose.

Then the long-suffering Ulysses slept
 On a wrought couch beneath the sounding porch. 345
 Alcinous reclined in a recess,
 And by his side the queen his couch adorned.

BOOK VIII.

WHEN early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
 Up from his couch Alcinous arose ;
 Up rose Ulysses, noble warrior.
 The king Alcinous then led the way
 To the Phæacian forum, near the ships. 5
 When they arrived they sate in company
 On polished stones. Then through the city went
 Pallas Minerva, likening her form
 To th' herald of the wise Alcinous,
 Of brave Ulysses planning the return.
 And, standing by each man, addressed them thus : 10
 ' Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians !
 ' To the assembly come, that you may hear
 ' News of the stranger who has lately come
 ' Unto the house of wise Alcinous,
 ' A wand'rer o'er the sea, a God in form.'

She by her words the mind of each aroused, 15
 And soon the forum and the seats were filled
 With men. They wondered when they saw the son
 Of wise Laertes ; for Minerva shed
 Upon his head and shoulders grace divine ;

Made him more tall and portly to behold, 20
That so to the Phæacians he might seem
Both noble and majestic, and excel
In contests when Ulysses they should prove.
When in assembly they collected were,
Alcinous harangued them thus, and said : 25
‘ Ye chiefs and princes of Phæacia ! hear,
‘ While I shall tell you what my mind commands.
‘ This stranger, who he is I know not, came
‘ A wand’rer to my house ; and he may be
‘ Either of eastern or of western men.
‘ Convoy he asks, and prays that it be sure. 30
‘ A convoy let us hasten as of yore ;
‘ For no one else who to my house has come
‘ Has stayed lamenting for a convoy long.
‘ Come, let us launch a ship that sails the first 35
‘ Upon the sea, and from the people choose
‘ Youths fifty-two, before approved the best.
‘ Ye on the benches having bound the oars
‘ Debark, and quickly going to my house
‘ Prepare a feast : I will provide for all.
‘ Such charge I give the youths ; but ye the rest, 40
‘ The sceptred princes, to my house repair,
‘ That there the stranger we may entertain.
‘ Let none refuse ; and call that bard divine,
‘ Demodocus, on whom the God bestows
‘ A song to charm us when inclined to sing.’ 45

He spake and led the way : the sceptred chiefs
Followed ; a herald went to fetch the bard.
The youths selected, two and fifty, went
To the sea-shore as he commanded them.

But when they to the ship and sea had come, 50
Into the black wave's depth they launched the ship.
In the black ship they placed the masts and sails ;
Within the leathern rowlocks fixed the oars
In order due ; the white sails spread aloft,
And, in deep water anchoring the ship, 55
Went to the palace of Alcinous.
The porches, courts, and halls were filled with men
[Collected many there both young and old.]
For them Alcinous twelve sheep bade slay ;
Eight white-tusked swine ; two trailing-footed beeves.
They skinned and dressed them, and prepared the feast. 60
The herald near them brought the much-loved bard,
Whom the muse loved, and gave him good and ill ;
Deprived of eyes but gave him pleasant song.
Pontonous a silver-studded throne 65
Placed for him 'mid the guests, and rested it
Upon a column ; hung his tuneful harp
Above his head, and taught his hands to reach.
By him a dish and table fair he placed,
And cup of wine to drink when he inclined. 70
Upon the food prepared their hands they threw.
When they with food and drink were satisfied,
The muse aroused the bard the glorious deeds
Of men to sing ; a story whose renown
E'en then to heaven had reached ; the strife between
Ulysses and Achilles, Peleus' son ; 75
How once they quarrelled at a genial feast
In the God's honour, with outrageous words,
And Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced
When quarrelled thus the bravest of the Greeks.

For this Apollo by an oracle
 In sacred Pytho told him, when he crossed 80
 The marble threshold to consult the God.
 Then the beginning of calamity
 To Greeks and Trojans, so Jove willed, rolled on.
 This sang the famous bard : Ulysses then
 With his strong hands a purple kerchief drew
 Down o'er his head, and veiled his comely face, 85
 Shamed the Phæacians should his moist eyes see.
 Then when the bard divine his song had ceased,
 Wiping his tears away Ulysses took
 The kerchief from his head, and lifting up
 A goblet made libation to the Gods.
 But when the bard again began to sing, 90
 And the Phæacian princes urged him on,
 Delighted with the strain, Ulysses drew
 Again the kerchief o'er his head and groaned.
 He wept unseen by the Phæacians :
 Alcinous alone perceived and marked,
 As he beside him sate, his heavy groan ; 95
 And the Phæacians, fond of oars, addressed :
 ' Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians ! hear.
 ' We with the equally-divided feast,
 ' And with the harp, companion of the feast,
 ' Are satisfied. Now let us go and try 100
 ' Athletic contests, that the stranger may
 ' Tell to his friends, when home he goes, how far
 ' All other men in boxing we excel,
 ' In wrestling, leaping, and in speed of foot.'
 He spake, and, while they followed, led the way.
 A herald from the peg the loud-voiced harp 105

Took down, and by the hand Demodocus
Led from the hall, the way the other chief
Phæacians had gone to see the games.
They to the forum went ; unnumbered crowds
Attended ; many valiant youths stood up : 110
Uprose Acronius, Ocyalus,
Elatreus, Nautes, and Anchialus,
Prymneus, Eretmus, Ponteus, Proreus,
Thoon, and Anabesimus ; and next
Amphialus, the son of Polyneus,
The son of Tecton, and Euryalus 115
Vying with murd'rous Mars ; Eubolides,
Who was the best in figure and in face
Of all Phæacians next Laodomas.
Uprose Alcinous' three noble sons,
Laodomas, and, rival to the Gods,
Clytoneüs and Halius ; these tried
The foot-race first, and from the starting-place 120
The course was marked, and all of them at once
Flew swiftly, raising on the plain a dust.
Clytoneüs was far the best to run :
Long as a furrow's marked for mules to plough
In unturned ground, so far he ran the first
Up to the crowd, while they were left behind. 125
Then others tried the wrestling match severe :
Here all the best Euryalus outshone.
Amphialus in leaping was the first ;
Elatreus with the discus ; with the fist,
Son of Alcinous, Laodomas. 130
When they were all delighted with the games,
Laodomas addressed them with these words :

‘Come, friends! and let us now the stranger ask
 ‘If he is skilled in many games. In form
 ‘He’s not deficient, nor in thighs and knees, 135
 ‘In hands above, and sturdy neck and strength;
 ‘Nor lacks he youth, though worn by many woes;
 ‘For than the sea there’s nothing worse, I ween,
 ‘To break a man, however strong he be.’

To him Euryalus replied and said: 140

‘Well, hast thou spoken, O Laodomas!
 [‘Now with a challenge go and make thy speech.’]

Alcinous’ brave son, when this he heard,
 Stood in the midst and to Ulysses said:

‘Come, reverend stranger! thou too try the games, 145
 ‘If thou art skilled, as likely seems, therein. *Skill*
 ‘No greater glory to a man can be
 ‘Than what with hands and feet he can achieve.
 ‘Come try, and from thy mind thy cares disperse;
 ‘Not distant is the time of thy return; 150
 ‘Launched is the ship and ready are the crew.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said:
 ‘Laodomas! why jesting urge ye this?
 ‘More in my mind are sorrows than are games,
 ‘Who in time past have toiled and suffered much, 155
 ‘And now, in your assembly sitting, ask
 ‘Return; to king and people suppliant.’

Euryalus thus scoffingly replied:

‘Stranger! I do not think thee like to one
 ‘Well-skilled in all the many games of men, 160
 ‘But to a man who frequently in ships
 ‘Is chief of sailors who go trafficking,
 ‘Mindful of freight and watching for returns

‘And stealthy gains ; not to an athlete like.’

Ulysses, sternly eyeing him, replied :

165

‘Thou say’st not well ; thou seemest arrogant.

‘So the Gods give not graceful gifts to all,

‘As beauty, wisdom, eloquent address.

‘One man is mean in figure, but his form

‘God crowns with eloquence, and other men

170

‘Delighted gaze while fluently he speaks

‘With sweet persuasion, and amid them shines,

‘Who in the city view him as a God.

‘Again another to immortal Gods

‘Is like in form, but no grace crowns his words.

175

‘So though thy form is fair, nor God himself

‘Could mend it, thou art empty in thy mind.

‘Thou hast aroused my soul within my breast,

‘Thus rudely speaking ; not in games am I

‘A novice, as thou say’st. Among the first

180

‘Was I, when I could trust my youth and hands.

‘Now I’m oppressed by misery and woe ;

‘Have suffered much, and had experience

‘Of wars with men, and hardships in the waves.

‘Yet even so, though much I have endured,

‘I’ll make a trial in the games : thy speech

‘Has stung my soul, thy words have urged me on.’ 185

Cloaked as he was he rushed and seized a disc,

More large and heavy by no small excess

Than what Phæacians flung among themselves.

Whirling he sent it from his stalwart arm ;

Loud boomed the stone, and cowered to the ground 190

The long-oared ship-renowned Phæacians

Beneath the cast : past all the bounds it flew

Quick speeding from his hand ; Minerva marked
 The limit, like a man in form, and said :
 ‘ A blind man, stranger ! could thy mark discern 195
 ‘ By feeling ; ’tis not with the crowd confused
 ‘ But far the first ; take courage in the game ;
 ‘ This no Phæacian will or reach or pass.’

Divine Ulysses at her words rejoiced,
 When in the games a kindly friend he saw, 200
 And the Phæacians in light strain addressed :
 ‘ Come up to that, young men ! and I will throw
 ‘ Another such as it, or further still.
 ‘ And in the other games let any one,
 ‘ Whose heart and mind persuade him, come and try, 205
 ‘ (For much ye have provoked me) or with fist
 ‘ Or wrestling, running ; nothing reck I which :
 ‘ Any Phæacian but Laodomas ;
 ‘ He is my host : who with his friend would strive ?
 ‘ The man is foolish and of no account
 ‘ Who, in a strange land, with his host contends 210
 ‘ In games, and perils all his own success.
 ‘ None of the rest refuse I or disdain,
 ‘ Willing to know and try them, face to face,
 ‘ No mean competitor in manly games.
 ‘ The polished bow to handle well I know, 215
 ‘ And would be first to shoot at and to hit
 ‘ A man among a crowd of enemies,
 ‘ Though many of my friends stood by and shot.
 ‘ Me Philoctetes only with the bow
 ‘ Could vanquish, when at Troy we Grecians shot. 220
 ‘ But o’er the rest I claim pre-eminence,
 ‘ As many men as now eat food on earth.

‘ But with the former men I will not vie,
 ‘ Alcides or Œchalian Eurytus,
 ‘ Who with th’ immortals vied in archery. 225
 ‘ Therefore great Eurytus died suddenly,
 ‘ Nor reached old age ; for him Apollo slew
 ‘ In anger, when he challenged him to shoot
 ‘ Further than other men an arrow send.
 ‘ I hurl the spear ; but only am afraid
 ‘ Lest some Phæacian in the race excel ; 230
 ‘ For I have been disastrously subdued
 ‘ ’Mid many waves, nor is much care bestowed
 ‘ On ship-board ; therefore are my knees unnerved.’

So spake he, and they all in silence sate.

Alcinous alone replied and said : 235

‘ Stranger ! thou nothing say’st offensively,
 ‘ But dost consent thy prowess to display,
 ‘ Enraged because that man disparaged thee :
 ‘ Whereas no mortal could thy prowess blame,
 ‘ Who in his mind knows prudent things to speak. 240
 ‘ Now hear my words that, when within thy halls
 ‘ Thou featest with thy wife and children near,
 ‘ Thou to some other hero mayst them tell,
 ‘ Remembering our prowess, and what deeds
 ‘ Jove from our sires perpetuates to us. 245
 (‘ We not for boxing are or wrestling famed,
 ‘ But are swift runners, and excel in ships.
 ‘ To us the feast, the harp, the dance are dear,
 ‘ Changes of garments, and hot baths and beds.
 ‘ But come, Phæacian dancers ! all the best ! 250
 ‘ Disport ye, that our guest may tell his friends,
 ‘ When home he goes, how others we excel

‘ In seamanship, in running, dance and song.
 ‘ Let some one go, and for Demodocus
 ‘ Bring the loud harp which in my house is laid.’ 255

So spake Alcinous: a herald rushed
 From the king’s house the hollow harp to bring.
 Nine chosen public arbiters stood up,
 Who in the contests used to manage well.
 They smoothed the dancing-ground, made wide the
 space. 260

The herald, bringing for Demodocus
 The sounding harp, approached, and to the midst
 He went, while young men in the prime of life
 Stood up around him, skilful in the dance,
 And beat the graceful measure with their feet.
 Ulysses watched them twinkling and admired.

The harper then upraised a charming song,
 The love of well-crowned Venus and of Mars,
 How in the house of Vulcan they intrigued
 In secrecy, and many gifts he gave,
 When he dishonoured royal Vulcan’s couch. 270

But quickly came the sun, a messenger,
 Who had detected them in their intrigue.
 When Vulcan heard the tale that grieved his mind,
 Devising mischief, to his forge he went,
 And on the stock a weighty anvil placed,
 And hammered strong indissoluble chains 275
 That they might firm remain, and when the toils
 He had completed, went, enraged with Mars,
 Into the chamber where his bed was laid,
 And round the posts entwined the circling chains.
 They hung in numbers from the roof above,

Dance
admired
for gifts
others!
 265

Slender as spiders' webs, which none could see, 280
Not e'en a God ; so subtly were they made.
When he had placed the toils around the bed
He hasted off to Lemnos, well-built town,
The place most dear to him in all the earth.
Mars, for the golden reins renowned, had kept
No blind look-out : when Vulcan, famed for art, 285
He saw apart retiring, to the house
Of Vulcan, famed for art, he went with speed,
Intent to gain the well-crowned Venus' love.
She from her father, Saturn's mighty son,
Came recently and sate : he went within, 290
Clung to her hand and then addressed her thus :
' Come, dear ! and let us in our love indulge :
' Vulcan is not at home, for he is gone
' To Lemnos, to the rough-voiced Sintians.'
He spake, and she accorded free assent. 295
The artful toils which crafty Vulcan made
Contracted round, nor could they move a limb,
And then they knew that there was no escape.
The famous Vulcan, lame in both his feet, 300
Drew near, returning ere he Lemnos reached ;
The sun had kept a watch and told the tale ;
[And to his house he hastened, grieved at heart].
Rage seized him as within the doors he stood ;
He shouted loudly and called all the Gods : 305
' O father Jove ! and all ye blessed Gods !
' Come these absurd intolerable deeds
' To see ; how Venus, daughter of high Jove,
' Me lame dishonours and loves fiendish Mars ;
' For he is fair and active ; I am weak ; 310

' For this none other are to blame except
 ' My parents, who should not have giv'n me birth.
 ' But come and see how plain the fact appears,
 ' While my dishonour I with grief behold.
 ' I never thought they would so guilty be 315
 ' Though they might love ; they soon will have no
 wish
 ' To sleep, but toils and chains shall bind them both
 ' Until her sire repays the spousal gifts,
 ' Which I have pledged for this immodest girl
 ' His daughter, beauteous but incontinent.' 320

He spake : the Gods assembled at the house.
 The earth-surrounding Neptune thither came,
 Luck-giving Hermes, Phœbus, archer-king :
 The Goddesses for shame remained at home.
 The bounteous Gods within the portals stood ; 325
 And unextinguishable laughter rose
 Among the blessed Gods, when they beheld
 The arts of Vulcan for his craft renowned :
 And looking to his neighbour thus said one ;
 ' Bad deeds ne'er thrive : the slow o'ertakes the swift :
 ' So now slow Vulcan has got hold of Mars. 330
 ' Lame though he be, the swiftest God who dwells
 ' Upon Olympus he has caught by art,
 ' And he th' adulterer's penalty must pay.'

So they to one another such things spake ;
 Then Phœbus, son of Jove, to Hermes said : 335
 ' Hermes ! thou son of Jove, the messenger,
 ' Giver of luck ! how wouldst thou like to sleep,
 ' With strong chains bound, in golden Venus' couch ?'

Hermes, the messenger, to him replied :

‘ Would it were so, O Phœbus, archer-king !
‘ Though thrice as many chains encircled me, 340
‘ And all ye Gods and Goddesses looked on,
‘ Still by the golden Venus I would sleep.’

So spake he : laughter rose among the Gods :
But Neptune did not laugh ; he still besought
Vulcan, the craftsman, to let Mars go free, 345
And with his winged words addressed him thus :
‘ Loose them, and I will promise he shall pay
‘ At thy demand what’s right among the Gods.’

The lame illustrious Vulcan then replied :
‘ Earth-circling Neptune ! do not ask me this : 350
‘ The pledges of the worthless worthless are.
‘ How could I come on thee among the Gods
‘ Should Mars abscond, escaping debt and chains ?’

Neptune, the shaker of the earth, replied : 355
‘ Vulcan ! should Mars, escaping from the debt,
‘ Take flight, the obligation I will pay.’

The lame illustrious Vulcan answered him :
‘ It is not fit that I thy words gainsay.’

Strong Vulcan, speaking thus, relaxed the chains.
They from the chains, though firm they were, set free,
Rushed off without delay : to Thracia he ; 360
To Cyprus laughter-loving Venus went,
To Paphos, where her grove and altar are.
The Graces bathed, and with ambrosial oil,
Such as to Gods belongs, anointed her, 365
And clothed with lovely vests, a sight to see !

Thus sang the famous bard with great delight ;
Ulysses heard and the Phæacians,
Men of long oars and famed for seamanship.

To Halius and to Laodomas

370

Alcinous then gave command to dance

Alone ; for with them no one could contend.

When the fair purple ball within their hands,

Which skilful Polybus had made, they took,

One of them threw it to the shady clouds,

While back he bent ; the other leaping high

375

Easily caught it ere it reached the ground.

But when with eagerness they'd plied the ball,

With rapid change upon the ground they danced.

The other youths who stood beside the game

Applauded, and a mighty noise arose.

380

Ulysses then Alcinous addressed:

' O king Alcinous ! illustrious chief !

' Thou boastest that thy dancers are the best ;

' 'Tis realized ; I wonder while I gaze.'

He spake ; Alcinous, the sacred king,

385

Rejoicing, thus to the Phæacians said :

' Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians ! hear :

' The guest a man of judgment seems to be ;

' Let us a gift of hospitality,

' As fit it is we should, on him bestow.

' For o'er the people twelve illustrious chiefs

390

' Bear sway as rulers, and the thirteenth I.

' To him let each a well-washed cloak and vest,

' And of the precious gold a talent, give.

' Collecting quickly let us bring them all,

' That to the feast he may rejoicing go ;

395

' And let Euryalus with words and gift

' Appease him, for he has not spoken well.'

He spake ; they all agreed and orders gave,

And each a herald sent the gifts to bring.

Euryalus addressed him then and said : 400

‘ O king Alcinous ! illustrious chief !

‘ I will appease the stranger, as thou bidst.

‘ I’ll give this sword made all of brass, with hilt

‘ Of silver, which of new-cut ivory

‘ A sheath surrounds ; and great its value is.’ 405

Thus speaking he the silver-hilted sword
Placed in his hands, and said these winged words :

‘ Hail, guest revered ! if any word unkind

‘ Was uttered, let the whirl-winds bear it off !

‘ May the Gods grant to thee to see thy wife, 410

‘ And to thy home return, for many woes

‘ Thou bearest, from thy friends removed afar ! ’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ And hail thou too, my friend ! and may the Gods

‘ Grant thee prosperity, nor may regret

‘ Come over thee hereafter for the sword 415

‘ Which thou hast giv’n me with appeasing words ! ’

He spake and round his shoulders placed the sword.

The sun was setting, and the gifts arrived,

Which to the palace of Alcinous

The noble heralds bore ; and them the sons

Of the renowned Alcinous received ;

And in their venerable mother’s charge 420

They placed the beauteous gifts. Alcinous

Went first ; they came, and sate on lofty thrones ;

And to Arêtè spake Alcinous :

‘ A chest go bring me, wife ! the best ;

‘ And place a well-washed cloak and vest therein. 425

‘ Put on the fire a cauldron ; water heat,

‘ That, having bathed and seen the gifts bestowed,
 ‘ Which the illustrious Phæacians brought,
 ‘ He may enjoy the feast, and hear the song :
 ‘ And I will give him this fair golden bowl, 430
 ‘ That all his days he may, remembering me,
 ‘ To Jove and th’ other Gods libation make.’

He spake : Arêtè bade her maidens quick
 A mighty tripod on the fire to place.
 They on the fire a bathing-tripod placed, 435
 Poured water in and kindled wood below.
 The flames surrounded it ; the water boiled.
 Meantime Arêtè from her chamber brought
 A fair chest for the stranger, and therein
 The beauteous gifts she placed, the vests, the gold, 440
 Which the Phæacians gave him ; and herself
 A cloak and tunic fair bestowed therein ;
 And then addressed him with these winged words :
 ‘ Look to the lid thyself, and draw the band,
 ‘ That no one on the way may injure them,
 ‘ When thou sleep’st sweetly, going o’er the sea.’ 445

When this long-suffering Ulysses heard,
 He fixed the lid, and tied an artful knot,
 Which wily Circe taught him how to make. *ce. my*
 The house-keeper then bade him quickly bathe
 Ent’ring the cauldron ; and he eagerly 450
 Eyed the warm water, cared for scantily
 Since fair Calypso’s palace he had left,
 Where care was on him, as a God, bestowed.
 When him the maids had bathed and rubbed with oil,
 Round him a tunic and fair vest they threw. 455
 He, going from the bath, the feasters joined.

Nausicaa, with beauty from the Gods,
Stood by a column of the well-made roof.
She at Ulysses looked admiringly,
And then addressed him with these winged words : 460
' Hail, stranger ! when thou goest to thine home
' Remember me, to whom thou ow'st thy life.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :
' Nausicaa ! of brave Alcinous
' The child ! may Jupiter, the thundering spouse 465
' Of Juno, grant that I may so go home
' And see the day of my return, as I
' Will ever vows as to a Goddess make
' To thee ; for, lady ! thou hast saved my life.'

He spake, and sate by king Alcinous.
The portions now they carved, and mingled wine. 470
A herald then Demodocus led in,
The bard much loved and honoured by them all,
And 'mid the feasters by a column placed.
The wise Ulysses to a herald said,
The back dividing of a fierce-toothed swine 475
With liquid fat besprent, while more was left :
' Herald ! this flesh give to Demodocus,
' That he may eat. Afflicted as I am
' This compliment I'll pay, for bards may claim
' Respect and honour from all earthly men ; 480
' Them the muse teaches song, and loves their race.'

He spoke ; the herald placed it in the hands
Of famed Demodocus, and he rejoiced.
Upon the food prepared their hands they laid.
When they with drink and food were satisfied, 485
Ulysses thus Demodocus addressed :

‘ Demodocus ! above all mortal men
 ‘ I praise thee : thee the muse, the child of Jove,
 ‘ Or Phœbus self has taught ; thou singest well
 ‘ The Grecians’ fate in order ; what they did
 ‘ And suffered, and what toils they underwent, 490
 ‘ As there thyself, or taught by one who was.

{ Come ! vary now the theme, and sing
 { About the building of the wooden horse,
 ‘ Which, with Minerva’s help, Epēus made ;

‘ That wile which into the Acropolis
 ‘ Divine Ulysses introduced, and filled
 ‘ With warriors who Ilium o’erthrew. 495
 ‘ Would that in order thou couldst this recite !
 ‘ And I will tell it forth to all mankind
 ‘ How God has given thee a song divine.’

He spake ; and he inspired by God began,
 Selecting for his song how in their ships 500

{ The Argives, having burned their tents, set sail.

They now around the famed Ulysses sate
 Upon Troy’s forum, hid within the horse,
 Which to the citadel the Trojans drew ;
 And there it stood ; they many vain words said, 505
 Sitting around, and threefold counsel took ;

Either to cut it with relentless sword ;
 Or drag and hurl it down a precipice ;
 Or make it a peace-offering to the Gods.

And this their final purpose was to be : 510

‘Twas fate that they should perish, when the town
 Enclosed the wooden horse, where sate the chiefs
 Of Argos, bringing death and fate to Troy.

He sang how the Achæans sacked the town,

Poured from the hollow ambush of the horse. 515
He sang what each did to destroy the town ;
With Menelaus how Ulysses sought,
Like Mars, the palace of Deiphobus ;
And how, a dreadful warfare having dared,
At last he conquered by Minerva's aid. 520

Thus sang the famous bard : Ulysses wept,
And from his eyes a tear bedewed his cheeks.
As wails a woman, clinging to her spouse
Who for his home and countrymen has died,
From town and children seeking to repel 525
The day so pitiless ; she sees him breathe
His dying gasp, and lying on him weeps ;
Behind, the foe her back and shoulders strike,
And bear her off, a slave, to toil and woe,
While her cheeks fade away with piteous grief ; 530
Ulysses so a piteous tear let fall.

His weeping was from all the rest concealed :
Alcinous observed it as he sate
Beside, and heard him groaning heavily ;
And the Phæacians, fond of oars, addressed : 535
‘ Princes and chiefs of the Phæacians ! hear :
‘ His loud harp let Demodocus restrain,
‘ For his song does not give delight to all.
‘ Since the feast ended and the bard arose,
‘ The stranger has not ceased at all from grief ; 540
‘ And sorrow greatly has o’ercome his mind.
‘ Now let him cease, that we may all be pleased,
‘ Both hosts and guest, for ’tis much better so.
‘ ’Tis for our honoured guest these things are done ;
‘ Convoy and gifts which we in love bestow. 545

‘ A guest and suppliant as brother is,
‘ However little he may touch our hearts.
‘ But thou ! conceal not in thine artful mind
‘ What I shall ask ; ’tis better to speak out.
‘ Say by what name thy father, mother, those 550
‘ Of thine own city, those who dwell around,
‘ Address thee : no man is without a name,
‘ Or base or noble, since he first was born.
‘ Men’s parents give it when they give them birth.
‘ Tell me thy land, thy people and thy town ; 555
‘ That our ships thither may know how to go :
‘ For the Phæacian ships no pilots have
‘ Nor rudders, such as other ships possess,
‘ But know themselves the minds and thoughts of men ;
‘ The cities and rich fields of all men know, 560
‘ And quickly pass the deep gulf of the sea,
‘ By mist and cloud concealed ; nor is there fear
‘ That they should come to harm or be destroyed.
‘ [This formerly I heard my father say,
‘ Nausithous ; that Neptune had of us 565
‘ Much jealousy, because we convoyed all
‘ In safety ; and that, at a future time,
‘ He said he would destroy a well-wrought ship
‘ Of the Phæacians on its voyage home
‘ In the deep sea, and that a mighty rock
‘ Should hide our city, so the old man said, 570
‘ And this the God may or perform or not,
‘ According to the pleasure of his mind.]
‘ But come now ! tell me this and tell me true ;
‘ Where thou hast wandered and to what lands been ;
‘ The men themselves ; the cities where they dwell ;

- ‘If they are cruel, savage, and unjust, 575
 ‘Or hospitable and of mind devout.
 ‘Say why thou weep’st, why grieve’st in thy soul,
 ‘Hearing the fate of Grecians and of Troy?
 ‘This the Gods caused and planned the death of men,
 ‘To be a song for those about to be. 580
 ‘In front of Troy has one, thy kinsman, died,
 ‘Step-son, step-father, who have dearest been
 ‘In blood and race? or pleasant to thy mind?
 ‘Some valiant friend? no less than brother is 585
 ‘The friend who is in prudent counsels skilled.’
-

BOOK IX.

THE wise Ulysses answered him and said:

- ‘Alcinous! of all the people chief!
 ‘’Tis well indeed to such a bard as this
 ‘To listen, who is like the Gods in voice.
 ‘No object more delightful is, I ween, 5
 ‘Than this; when all the people pleasure take,
 ‘And feasting listen to a bard at home,
 ‘In order; while the tables near are full
 ‘Of bread and flesh, and the cup-bearer draws
 ‘Wine from the bowl and pours it in the cups. 10
 ‘This seems to me most charming to the mind.
 ‘Thy spirit urges thee to search my woes,
 ‘So sad that I the more must grieve and groan.
 ‘What shall I first, what shall I last recite?
 ‘For many woes the heav’nly Gods have caused. 15

‘First I will tell that ye may know my name ;

‘Next how, escaping the relentless day,

‘I am your guest and dwell from hence afar.

Story of

‘I am Ulysses, of Laertes son,

‘Esteemed by all men for my crafty plans,

20

‘And of renown which reaches to the sky.

‘I dwell in sunny Ithaca ; a mount

‘Shady, far-seen, called Neriton, is there.

‘Near to each other many isles lie round,

‘Samos, Zacynthus, and Dulichium.

‘Itself where low stands high up in the sea

25

‘Westward, but they are to the dawning sun.

‘The isle is rough, but nourishes brave youths :

‘I can nought sweeter than one’s own land see :

‘Calypso, nymph divine, detained me thence

‘[In hollow caves and wooed me for her spouse] ;

30

‘Also Ææan, crafty, Circe kept

‘Me in her house and wooed me for her spouse.

‘But they did not persuade my mind and breast :

‘Than home and parents nothing is more sweet,

‘E’en though a rich house in a stranger land

35

‘One may inhabit, from his parents far—

‘Come ! I will tell thee of my sad return,

*what happens
he left*

‘Which Jove laid on me when I came from Troy.

‘The wind that bore from Troy conducted me

‘To the Ciconians at Ismarus.

40

‘I sacked the city and destroyed the men ;

‘Took from it wives and goods, and shared them so

‘That none should question the equality.

‘I bade that we with hasty food should fly,

‘But in their folly they did not obey :

‘ Much wine was drunk, and many sheep they slew, 45
‘ And trailing-footed oxen by the shore.
‘ But then Ciconians to Ciconians called,
‘ Their neighbours, more and braver than themselves,
‘ Who on the main-land dwelt, and skilful were
‘ To fight from chariots and as infantry. 50
‘ Many as leaves and flowrets in the spring
‘ They came at early dawn : Jove’s evil fate
‘ Came o’er us that much grief we should endure.
‘ The battle ranging by the ships they fought,
‘ And struck each other with their brazen darts. 55
‘ While it was dawn and waxed the sacred day,
‘ So long repelling greater force we stood :
‘ When the sun reached the oxen-loosing west,
‘ Then the Ciconians subdued the Greeks.
‘ Six well-greaved friends from ev’ry ship were slain, 60
‘ And we, the rest, escaped from death and fate.
‘ Thence onward, grieved at heart, we sailed, rejoiced
‘ To flee from death though we had lost our friends.
‘ No further did our vessels go, till thrice
‘ Each of our hapless friends we had invoked, 65
‘ By the Ciconians slain upon the shore.
‘ The cloud-compelling Jove urged Boreas
‘ Against our ships with a tremendous storm,
‘ Cov’ring at once the earth and sea with clouds ;
‘ And from the sky the night came rushing down.
‘ The ships were borne disorderly ; the wind 70
‘ In three-fold, four-fold fragments rent the sails ;
‘ We laid them in the ships and dreaded death,
‘ And rowed the ships on eagerly to land.
‘ Two days two nights we there unmoving lay,

- ‘ Wasting our mind with sorrow and fatigue : 75
‘ But when fair-haired Aurora brought the third,
‘ We reared the masts and spread the canvas white,
‘ And sate while wind and pilots led the ships.
‘ And I should scatheless have my country reached,
‘ But me the wave, the current and north wind, 80
‘ While coasting Malea, past Cythēra drove.
‘ Thence for nine days by foul winds I was borne
‘ Upon the fishy sea, but on the tenth .
‘ We reached the land of the Lotophagi.
‘ We went upon the shore and water drew, 85
‘ And my companions supped beside the ships.
‘ When we with food and drink were satisfied,
‘ I sent my friends to go and make research
‘ Who the men were who lived upon the land ;
‘ Selecting two ; a herald for the third. 90
‘ They went and mixed with the Lotophagi :
‘ Now the Lotophagi did not devise
‘ Their death, but gave them lotus for their food.
‘ Whoever eats the lotus’ honeyed fruit
‘ Nor wills to send back tidings nor return. 95
‘ They wished with the Lotophagi to stay,
‘ Eating the lotus, and return forget.
‘ I dragged them, weeping, to the ships by force,
‘ And bound them under hatches in the ship.
‘ My other dear companions then I bade 100
‘ On board the rapid ships to go in haste,
‘ Lest they eat lotus and return forget.
‘ They went aboard and on the benches sate,
‘ And sitting beat the white sea with their oars.
‘ Thence further on, aggrieved in heart, we sailed, 105

U. my

‘ And to the haughty lawless Cyclops’ land
 ‘ We came, who, trusting in th’ immortal Gods,
 ‘ With their hands neither plant the seed nor plough ;
 ‘ But ev’rything springs up, unsown, unploughed,
 ‘ Wheat, barley, and the vines which bear the wine 110
 ‘ In their full bunches, which Jove’s rain promotes.
 ‘ They have no meetings to consult nor laws,
 ‘ But on the tops of lofty mountains dwell
 ‘ In hollow caves. To wives and children each
 ‘ Gives laws, nor one another they respect. 115
 ‘ A narrow isle extends beyond the port
 ‘ Of the Cyclopean land, nor near nor far,
 ‘ Woody, wherein unnumbered wild goats breed ;
 ‘ For human footsteps drive them not away,
 ‘ Nor hunters track with dogs, who in the woods 120
 ‘ Hardships endure upon the mountain tops.
 ‘ [With flocks and tillage ’tis not occupied
 ‘ Unsown, unploughed, it is from day to day
 ‘ Devoid of men but feeds the bleating goats.]
 ‘ No ships with painted sides the Cyclops’ have, 125
 ‘ Nor are there ship-builders, who else might toil
 ‘ On well-benched ships and traffic execute,
 ‘ Going between the towns of men, as oft
 ‘ Men to each other cross the sea in ships.
 ‘ They might have laboured on a well-housed isle ; 130
 ‘ For ’tis not barren, and it might produce
 ‘ All crops in season, for there meadows are
 ‘ Along the margin of the white-waved sea,
 ‘ Watered and soft ; nor vines would perish there.
 ‘ The ploughing might be smooth, the culture deep,
 ‘ In season they would reap ; the soil is rich. 135

‘ Secure the port, nor need of cable there,
‘ Nor to cast anchor, nor the stern-ropes fix ;
‘ Only to beach the ships and bide the time
‘ Till the crew willed it and the breezes blew :
‘ At the port’s head bright water flows, a spring 140
‘ Beneath a cave ; and poplars grow around.
‘ We thither sailed and some God led the way
‘ Through the dark night, nor gave us power to see.
‘ The air was thick around the ships ; no moon
‘ Shone from the sky, but it was veiled with clouds. 145
‘ No one could see the island with his eyes ;
‘ Nor the long waves that rolled upon the land
‘ We saw, before our well-benched ships were beached.
‘ When they were beached, we took down all the sails,
‘ And disembarked upon the shore ourselves ; 150
‘ And slumbering there we waited for the dawn.
‘ But when the rosy-fingered morn appeared,
‘ We circled through the isle admiringly.
‘ Nymphs, daughters of the ægis-bearing Jove,
‘ Drove the wild goats whereon my friends might feast. 155
‘ We crooked bows and light long-shafted spears
‘ Took from the ships ; and in three companies
‘ Arranged we shot, and God gave pleasant sport.
‘ Twelve ships had followed me ; to each nine goats
‘ Were lotted ; ten they chose for me alone. 160
‘ All day we feasted, till the set of sun,
‘ On flesh abundant and delicious wine ;
‘ For not as yet the red wine failed the ships,
‘ But was therein, for much we each had drawn
/ ‘ In casks, when sacking the Ciconian town. 165
‘ We looked upon the neighb’ring Cyclops’ land ;

‘ The smoke, the cry of them, their sheep and goats
‘ Perceived. When set the sun and darkness came,
‘ We slept beside the breakers of the sea.
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared, 170
‘ I called a council and addressed them all :
‘ “ The rest of you, my dear companions ! stay.
‘ “ I with my ship and with my crew will go
‘ “ And make experiment what these men are ;
‘ “ If they are cruel, savage, and unjust, 175
‘ “ Or hospitable and of mind devout.”
‘ I spake, and went on board, and bade my crew
‘ To go on board and loose the mooring ropes.
‘ They quick embarked and on the benches sate,
‘ And beat the sea in order with their oars. 180
‘ When on the shore we nearly had arrived,
‘ A lofty cavern near the sea we saw,
‘ Upon a cape, with laurels overhung :
‘ Much cattle, sheep and goats, were sleeping there.
‘ A lofty fold was built with earth-dug stones, 185
‘ With fir-trees tall and oaks with lofty boughs ;
‘ There, sleeping, lay a monstrous man, who kept
‘ The sheep, a long way off, nor converse held
‘ With others, but apart planned lawless deeds.
‘ He was a monstrous prodigy, not like 190
‘ Bread-eating man, but like a woody crag
‘ Of some tall hill, apart from others seen.
‘ My other dear companions then I bade
‘ There by the ship to stay and draw it up.
‘ But I selected from them twelve, the best, 195
‘ To go. I had a skin of black sweet wine,
‘ Which Maron, of Euanthes son, had giv’n,

‘ Priest of Apollo who guards Ismarus :
‘ For I had sheltered him, with wife and child,
‘ Respecting him ; for in the shady grove 200
‘ To Phœbus sacred he had his abode :
‘ And many splendid gifts he gave to me ;
‘ Of well-wrought gold he seven talents gave ;
‘ He gave a bowl all-silver ; and of wine,
‘ Sweet and unmixed, a liquor for the Gods,
‘ He drew twelve casks. Now no one in the house 205
‘ Knew of this wine, no slave nor servant knew ;
‘ He only, his dear wife, one housekeeper ;
‘ And when they drank this honey-sweet red wine,
‘ He filled one bowl and twenty measures poured
‘ Of water in, and fragrant was its scent 210
‘ Divine ; to cease from drinking it was hard.
‘ Of this I filled and bore an ample skin,
‘ And in a basket food. My noble mind
‘ Thought that the man, with mighty strength arrayed,
‘ Savage, would come, not knowing rights nor laws. 215
‘ Quick to the cave we came nor him within
‘ We found, for he was feeding his fat sheep.
‘ All in the cave we curiously scanned ;
‘ Baskets with cheese were loaded ; and the folds
‘ Of lambs and kids were full, all separate :
‘ Apart the older, those of middle age 220
‘ Apart, the yearlings too apart : with whey
‘ The fashioned vessels, pails and buckets, swam,
‘ Wherein he milked. My friends besought me first
‘ To take the cheese and go ; and afterwards 225
‘ To the swift ships to drive from off the folds
‘ The kids and lambs, and o’er the salt sea sail.

‘ I heeded not, though ’twould have better been,
‘ That I might see him and some gifts receive :
‘ When seen unwelcome was he to my friends. 230
‘ A fire we lighted and an offering made ;
‘ Took of the cheese and ate, and stayed within
‘ Till from his shepherding he came : he bore
‘ A burthen of dry wood to cook his meal,
‘ And threw it with a crash outside the cave. 235
‘ Affrighted to an inmost nook we rushed ;
‘ He to the wide cave drove his fatted sheep,
‘ As many as he milked, and left the males,
‘ The rams and goats, outside the cavern’s mouth.
‘ He lifted up and placed a mighty door, 240
‘ Strong, which not even chariots twenty-two,
‘ Good and four-wheeled, could raise from off the ground.
‘ Such was the rock he placed against the door.
‘ He sate and milked the sheep and bleating goats,
‘ All in their course, and gave to each its kid. 245
‘ Half the white milk he curdled into cheese,
‘ And, having pressed, in wicker baskets stored.
‘ Half he in vessels placed, that he might have
‘ To drink at pleasure and to aid his meal.
‘ But when these works he hastily had done, 250
‘ A fire he kindled, saw us and inquired ;
‘ “ Strangers ! who are ye ? whence from o’er the waves ?
‘ “ Come ye for traffic ? or mere rovers ye ?
‘ “ Or pirates, wand’ring o’er the sea, who risk
‘ “ Their own lives, bringing ill to foreigners ? ” 255
‘ So spake he, and our heart within was crushed,
‘ Fearing his voice, and him, the monstrous man.
‘ Yet with these words I answered him and said :

- “ We Greeks come wand’ring away from Troy, 260
 “ With various winds across the sea’s great gulf,
 “ Bound homeward : by another road we came
 “ And other ways ; so Jove was pleased to plan.
 “ The host of Agamemnon, Atreus’ son,
 “ Of greatest earthly fame, we boast to be ;
 “ Such city has he sacked, slain many men ; 265
 “ And hither we are come to touch thy knees,
 “ If thou wouldst give us hospitality,
 “ Or other gift, as is the stranger’s due.
 “ Most noble man ! respect the Gods ; for we
 “ Are suppliants, and Jove, the stranger’s God, 270
 “ Protects the stranger and the suppliant,
 “ And guards the strangers who deserve respect.”
 ‘ I spake ; he answered with relentless mind :
 “ Stranger ! thou art a fool, or com’st from far,
 “ Who bid’st me either fear or shun the Gods.
 “ The Cyclops’ heed not ægis-bearing Jove, 275
 “ Nor blessed Gods ; for we much stronger are.
 “ I would not, to avoid Jove’s enmity,
 “ Spare or thy friends or thee, unless I willed.
 “ But tell me where thou hast put in thy ship,
 “ Or off the cape or near, that I may know.” 280
 ‘ He spake to snare me, but did not deceive *Craftily*
 ‘ Me, well aware, who craftily replied :
 “ Neptune, the shaker of the earth has wrecked,
 “ And on a rocky promontory dashed
 “ My ship, upon the borders of your land,
 “ Where the wind drove it, blowing from the sea ; 285
 “ And I with these have dreadful death escaped.”
 ‘ He with relentless mind made no reply,

‘ But rushing onward seized upon my friends,
‘ And grasping two he dashed them to the ground,
‘ Like puppies, and their brains bedewed the earth.²⁹⁰
‘ Tearing them limb-meal* he prepared a feast,
‘ And, like a lion on the mountains bred,
‘ Devoured them, nor a fragment left behind
‘ Of entrails, flesh, or marrow-moistened bones.
‘ We, weeping, lifted up our hands to Jove,
‘ When such abominable deeds we saw,
‘ And helpless terror seized upon our minds. 295
‘ Soon as his mighty maw the Cyclops filled,
‘ Eaten man’s-flesh and washed it down with milk,
‘ He lay within the cave, among the sheep.
‘ With thought magnanimous I purposed then
‘ To draw my sharp sword from beside my thigh, 300
‘ And going near to wound him on the breast,
‘ Where the integuments surround the heart,
‘ With my hand feeling ; but another thought
‘ Detained me ; for we should have perished there,
‘ Since with our hands we never could have moved 305
‘ The mighty stone he placed before the door.
‘ So groaning there we waited for the dawn.
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
‘ A fire he kindled, milked the bleating sheep,
‘ All in due course and put its lamb to each.
‘ But when these works he hastily had done 310
‘ He seized on two men and his meal prepared.
‘ He fed, and drove the fat sheep from the cave :
‘ The mighty door-stone he with ease removed,

* “ O that I had her here to tear her *limb-meal* ! ”

Shakespeare, “ *Cymbeline*,” act ii, sc. 4.

‘ And, as it were a quiver’s lid, replaced.
‘ With many a whistle Cyclops to the hill 315
‘ Turned his fat sheep : with sad thoughts I was left
‘ Of vengeance, should Minerva grant my prayer :
‘ And to my mind this plan appeared the best.
‘ The Cyclops’ great club lay beside the fold,
‘ Made of green olive-wood, which he had cut 320
‘ To bear it when ’twas dry. We thought it like
‘ In size, as we beheld it, to the mast
‘ Of a black ship, impelled by twenty oars,
‘ Of burthen, made to cross the mighty gulf ;
‘ In length and girth such was it to behold.
‘ I stood and hewed about a cubit off, 325
‘ Gave it my friends and bade them plane it well :
‘ They made it smooth, and I made sharp the end,
‘ And standing charred it in the blazing fire.
‘ And then I took and hid it in the dung
‘ Which in abundance lay within the cave. 330
‘ I bade the others to decide by lot
‘ Who should courageously take up the stake,
‘ With me, and bore his eye out while he slept.
‘ Four drew the lots, the very men whom I
‘ Would have selected ; I was numbered fifth. 335
‘ Feeding his fair-fleeced sheep he came at eve,
‘ And drove the sheep within the cavern wide,
‘ All, nor left one without the spacious fold,
‘ Suspecting harm, or God had so ordained.
‘ The mighty door-stone then he raised and fixed. 340
‘ He sate and milked the sheep and bleating goats
‘ All in due course, and gave to each its kid.
‘ But when these works he hastily had done,

- ‘ Then grasping two his supper he prepared.
‘ Then standing near the Cyclops thus I spake : 345
‘ “ Cyclops ! since thou man’s-flesh hast eaten, drink
‘ “ This wine, that thou mayst know what drink our ship
‘ “ Concealed : to thee I this libation bring,
‘ “ If thou wouldst pity me, and send me home.
‘ “ But now thou art intolerably mad ; 350
‘ “ Unwise ! for how can one of all men come
‘ “ Hereafter, since thou actest lawlessly ? ”
‘ I spake : he took and drank it off, and, much
‘ With the sweet drink delighted, asked for more.
‘ “ Come, give me plenty ; tell me what’s thy name, 355
‘ “ That I forthwith upon thee may bestow
‘ “ A guest-gift, one in which thou mayst rejoice.
‘ “ For though the rich ground to the Cyclops’ bears
‘ “ Wine from abundant grapes, and Jove with rain
‘ “ Increases them, yet of ambrosia
‘ “ And nectar this wine is a specimen.” 360
‘ He spake and I the bright wine gave again,
‘ Thrice bringing ; thrice he madly drank it off.
‘ But when the wine came o’er the Cyclops’ mind,
‘ Then I addressed him with these honeyed words :
‘ “ Cyclops ! thou askest me my noble name.
‘ “ I’ll tell thee ; give the guest-gift as thou said’st. 365
‘ “ My name is Noman, and me Noman call
‘ “ My mother, father, and all other friends.”
‘ I spake ; he answered with relentless mind :
‘ “ Noman I’ll eat the last of all his friends,
‘ “ The others first : this shall thy guerdon be.” 370
‘ He spake, and sinking down he prostrate fell.
‘ There, bending back his brawny neck, he lay,

‘ And all-subduing sleep upon him seized.
 ‘ Wine from his throat, and morsels of man’s-flesh,
 ‘ Issued ; and, drunk with wine, he vomited.
 ‘ Under much ashes then I thrust the stake, 375
 ‘ Till it grew hot, and then I cheered my friends,
 ‘ Lest any in alarm should steal away.
 ‘ Then when the olive-stake, though green it was,
 ‘ Was ready to blaze up and made quite hot,
 ‘ I brought it near him from the fire ; my friends 380
 ‘ Stood by, and God inspired us all with strength.
 ‘ The olive-stake with sharpened point they took
 ‘ And fixed it in his eye : I, reared above, *Put out eye*
 ‘ Twisted it round, as when a ship-wright bores
 ‘ A ship-plank with an auger, and beneath 385
 ‘ Men on a thong lay hold and force it round
 ‘ On either side, and steadily it turns :
 ‘ So in his eye the fi’ry stake we whirled,
 ‘ And, hot as ’twas, the blood around it flowed,
 ‘ While the steam scorched his eye-lid and his brow,
 ‘ From his singed eye-ball, and its roots were cracked. 390
 ‘ As when a blacksmith dips a mighty axe,
 ‘ Or hatchet, in cold water hissing loud,
 ‘ And tempers ; this of iron is the strength ;
 ‘ So hissed his eye around the olive-stake :
 ‘ The rock re-echoed as he roared aloud. 395
 ‘ We rushed away in terror ; but the stake
 ‘ He from his eye with blood besprent withdrew,
 ‘ And madly dashed it from him with his hand ;
 ‘ And to the Cyclops’ loudly called, who dwelt
 ‘ Around in caves upon the windy crags : 400
 ‘ They, when they heard the cry, from all sides came,

‘ And standing by the cave asked what he ailed :

Why, Polyphemus! dost thou cursing cry,

“In the deep night, and rouse us from our sleep?”

‘ “ Does some one drive thy sheep against thy will, 405

‘ “ Or kill thee or by craft or violence?”

‘ Strong Polyphemus answered from the cave :

‘ “ Noman, my friends ! is killing me by craft

‘ “ And violence.” Then quickly they replied ;

‘ “ Though no man offers violence to thee

410

‘ “ So strong, thou canst not Jove’s disease escape ;

‘ “ But to thy sire, king Neptune, make thy pray’r. }

‘ They went away : my heart within me laughed,

‘ When thus my name and good device deceived.

‘ The Cyclops, groaning, agonized with pain,

415

‘ Felt with his hands, and from the doorway moved

‘ The stone, and sate there stretching out his hands,

‘ Striving to catch one going through the door ;

‘ And thought that I should act so foolishly.

‘ But I deliberated what was best,

‘ How for my friends and also for myself

420

‘ I might discover some escape from death,

‘ Revolving ev’ry stratagem and plan,

‘ As for dear life, for dreadful ill was near :

‘ And to my mind this counsel seemed the best :

‘ There stood the well-fed rams, with thick-set wool, 425

‘ Fine, large, and covered with a dusky fleece :

‘ These I tied silently with willow-twigs

‘ On which the Cyclops, lawless monster, slept ;

‘ Uniting three ; the mid one bore a man ;

‘ The two outside went covering my friends.

430

‘ Each man the three sheep bore ; but I a ram,

‘ For one there was the finest of the flock,
‘ Seized and beneath his fleecy belly lay ;
‘ Then turning round I grasped th’ abundant wool,
‘ And with a daring mind I held it firm ; 435
‘ And groaning thus we waited for the dawn.
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared
‘ Forth to the pasture issued all the rams ;
‘ The ewes unmilked were bleating round the pens,
‘ With swelling teats ; their master, racked with pain, 440
‘ Handled the sheep’s backs as they upright stood,
‘ But foolish did not notice how the men
‘ To the sheep’s woolly bellies were attached.
‘ Last of the flock the ram went through the door,
‘ Weighed down by wool and me, with prudent thoughts.
‘ Strong Polyphemus handled it and said : 445
‘ “ Good ram ! why through the cave com’st thou the last ?
‘ “ Aforetime by the sheep thou wert not left,
‘ “ But wentest first to crop the flow’ry grass
‘ “ With hasty step, and to the river’s stream 450
‘ “ Wert first to go, and first at even-tide
‘ “ To thy fold eagerly return’dst ; but now
‘ “ The last. Dost thou regret thy master’s eye,
‘ “ Which that bad man with his accursed friends
‘ “ Has blinded, and subdued my mind with wine,
‘ “ Noman, who shall not death, I ween, escape ? 455
‘ “ Couldst thou have sympathy with me or speech,
‘ “ Thou’dst tell me where that man my wrath evades :
‘ “ In all directions through the cave his brain
‘ “ Should on the ground be spattered, and my heart
‘ “ Rest from the pangs that worthless Noman caused.”
‘ Thus he the ram dismissed from out the door. 460

‘ A little way beyond the cave I first
 ‘ From the ram freed myself, then loosed my friends.
 ‘ Quickly we drove the swift sheep, weighed with fat,
 ‘ In devious course, till to the ship we came ; 465
 ‘ And to our dear friends welcome we appeared,
 ‘ We who escaped ; the others they bemoaned.
 ‘ I checked their wails, and with my eye-brows made
 ‘ A sign ; then bade them quickly put on board
 ‘ The fair fleeced sheep, and o’er the salt sea sail. 470
 ‘ Swift they embarked, and on the benches sate,
 ‘ And beat the sea in order with their oars.
 ‘ When I was distant far as one could shout,
 ‘ The Cyclops I addressed with cutting words :
 ‘ “ Cyclops ! thou wert not destined to devour 475
 ‘ “ The comrades of a man bereft of strength,
 ‘ “ Within thy hollow cave by violence.
 ‘ (“ Thy evil deeds were doomed to find thee out)
 ‘ “ Wretch ! daring in thine house thy guests to eat ;
 ‘ (“ So vengeance comes from Jove and all the Gods, *vengeance*
 ‘ I spake, but in his heart he raged the more, 480
 ‘ And tearing up a mighty mountain’s crag
 ‘ Hurl’d it ; before the dark-prowed ship it fell,
 ‘ [And little failed to strike the rudder’s point].
 ‘ The sea was troubled by the falling rock ;
 ‘ The wave back-flowing land-ward bore the ship,
 ‘ And the flood surging drove it on the shore : 485
 ‘ But seizing with my hands a long ship’s-pole
 ‘ I forced it off again, and bade my friends
 ‘ Lean to their oars that we might death escape,
 ‘ With my head signalling : they leaned and rowed. 490
 ‘ When o’er the sea we twice as far had gone,

‘ Again I to the Cyclops spoke : my friends
 ‘ With honeyed words addressed me on all sides :
 ‘ “ Audacious man ! why wilt thou irritate
 ‘ “ That savage, who hast cast upon the sea 495
 ‘ “ His weapon, and has brought the ship to land ?
 ‘ “ We thought we should have perished, had he heard
 ‘ “ One of us uttering or word or cry :
 ‘ “ He would our heads and the ship’s planks have crushed,
 ‘ “ Hurling a rugged rock ; so far he throws.”

‘ They spake, but did not my brave mind persuade.
 ‘ Again I spoke to him with angry mind : 500
 ‘ “ Cyclops ! if any one of mortal men
 ‘ “ Asks of the dreadful blinding of thine eye,
 ‘ “ Say that Ulysses, of Laertes son,
 ‘ “ Who dwells in Ithaca, has blinded thee.” 505

‘ I spake : he groaning with these words replied :
 ‘ “ O strange ! old oracles have come to pass :
 ‘ “ There was a prophet here, one good and great,
 ‘ “ Named Telemus, of Euremus the son,
 ‘ “ Who in the art of soothsaying excelled,
 ‘ “ And to old age among the Cyclops’ dwelt. 510
 ‘ “ He told me this would happen, and that I
 ‘ “ Should by Ulysses be deprived of sight.
 ‘ “ But I expected some man great and fair
 ‘ “ To come, some man with mighty strength endued :
 ‘ “ But now one small, of no account, and mean, 515
 ‘ “ My eye has blinded, conquering by wine.
 ‘ “ But hither come, Ulysses ! that I may
 ‘ “ Bestow a guest-gift on thee, and beseech
 ‘ “ The famous Neptune to escort thee home.
 ‘ “ I am his son, he boasts to be my sire ;

*reference to
 Polyphemus
 one-eyed*

“He, if he wills, will heal me, and none else 520

“Or of the blessed Gods or mortal men.”

‘He spake ; and I addressed him in reply :

“I wish I were as sure to send thee down,

“Of breath and life deprived, to Pluto’s house,

“As that not Neptune’s self will heal thine eye.” 525

‘I spake, and he to royal Neptune prayed :

“Hear, Neptune ! earth surrounding ! azure-haired !

“If I am thine, and if thou art my sire,

“Grant that Ulysses may not homeward go, 530

“[Laertes’ son, who dwells in Ithaca].

“But if ’tis fate that he his friends should see,

“And to his well-built house and country go,

“May he go late and wretched, having lost

“All his companions, in a stranger’s ship,

“And may he find calamities at home !” } 535

‘He spake in pray’r ; the dark-haired Neptune heard.

‘Then he a larger rock forthwith upheaved,

‘And, whirling it, his monstrous sinews strained :

‘He threw it just behind the dark-prowed ship,

‘And little failed to strike the rudder’s point. 540

‘The sea was troubled by the rock that came,

‘And to the land the wave bore on the ship.

‘When to the isle where all the well-benched ships

‘Were waiting we had come, my friends around

‘Sate sorrowing and long expecting us. 545

‘Arrived we drew the ship upon the sand,

‘And by the breakers’ side we disembarked.

‘The Cyclops’ sheep we took, and shared them so

‘That none should question the equality.

‘To me especially my well-greaved friends, 550

‘ In the division of the sheep, assigned
‘ A lamb ; and this to cloud-compelling Jove,
‘ The son of Saturn, who rules over all,
‘ Upon the shore they sacrificed, and burnt
‘ The thighs ; but he did not respect the rites,
‘ But planned how all the well-benched ships, and all
‘ My dear companions with them, should be lost. 555
‘ All day we feasted, till the set of sun,
‘ On flesh abundant and delicious wine.
‘ But when the sun went down and darkness came,
‘ Where the waves broke upon the shore we slept.
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared, 560
‘ Then my companions urgently I bade
‘ To go on board, and loose the mooring ropes.
‘ They quick embarked and on the benches sate,
‘ And beat the sea in order with their oars.
‘ Thence sailed we on, rejoiced from death to flee, 565
‘ Yet grieved at heart, for we had lost our friends.’

BOOK X.

‘ ÆOLIA’S isle we reached, where Æolus
‘ The son of Hippotas, by Gods beloved,
‘ Dwelt on the floating isle : a wall of brass
‘ Impregnable, and a sheer precipice
‘ Run round it ; children twelve within his house 5
‘ Were born, six daughters and six stalwart sons.
‘ He gave his daughters to his sons to wife ;

‘They, with their father dear and mother chaste,
‘Feast, and around them many dainties lie.
‘The house all day is redolent of feasts, 10
‘And in the hall is revelry. At night
‘They with their chaste wives sleep on tap’stried beds.
‘We to their city and fair houses came ;
‘For a whole month he entertained me there ;
‘On ev’ry thing he questioned me ; on Troy,
‘The Argive ships, and on the Greeks’ return, 15
‘And duly to him I related all.
‘When on my journey I required to go,
‘And asked despatch, he no refusal made,
‘But gave me convoy : from a nine year ox
‘He flayed the skin, and gave a bag wherein
‘The courses of the blust’ring winds he bound ; 20
‘For Jove had made him steward of the winds,
‘Or to appease or rouse, whiche’er he willed.
‘He bound it down within the hollow ship
‘With silver cord, that not a breath could ’scape :
‘But zephyr’s breeze he first sent forth to blow, 25
‘To carry ships and men ; but this it failed
‘To do, for by our folly we were lost.
‘Nine days we sailed along, by night and day,
‘But on the tenth my country’s land appeared,
‘And near at hand we saw men kindling fires. 30
‘Upon me wearied sweet sleep came, for I
‘Held fast, nor to another gave, the helm,
‘That we the quicker to our home might go.
‘Then my companions, talking each to each,
‘Said I was taking gold and silver home 35
‘From Æolus, the son of Hippotas ;

‘ And looking to his neighbour, thus one spake :
‘ “ ’Tis wonderful how he is deemed a friend,
‘ “ And held by all in honour, whereso’er
‘ “ He to their city and their land may go.
‘ “ Much treasure he, as booty, brings from Troy ; 40
‘ “ We, who have made a voyage long as he,
‘ “ Are home returning, but with empty hands.
‘ “ Now Æolus from friendship gives him these :
‘ “ Come ! let us quickly see what they may be,
‘ “ What gold and silver are within the bag.” 45
‘ So spake they : and their evil plan prevailed ;
‘ They loosed the bag, and out rushed all the winds ;
‘ Then a storm seized, and bore them off to sea,
‘ Weeping, away from their paternal land.
‘ I, waking, meditated in my mind 50
‘ Whether to rush and perish in the sea,
‘ Or silently endure ’mid living men :
‘ But I endured and stayed ; and in a ship
‘ With covered face I lay : the ships were borne
‘ Back to Æolia’s island by the storm 55
‘ Of adverse wind, while my companions groaned :
‘ Then on the land we went and water drew,
‘ And my companions feasted by the ships.
‘ When we were satisfied with food and drink,
‘ Attended by a herald and a friend
‘ To th’ house of Æolus I went, and found 60
‘ Him with his wife and children at a feast.
‘ Ent’ring the house we by the portals sate :
‘ They were astonished in their mind, and asked
‘ “ How comest thou, Ulysses ! what ill fate
‘ “ Afflicts thee ? carefully we sent thee on 65

“ To home, and house, and to what else is dear.”

‘ They spake ; but I with grieving heart replied :

“ Bad friends have ruined me, unlucky sleep

“ Besides ; but cure it, for, my friends ! ye can.”

‘ Thus with insinuating words I spoke : 70

‘ They silence kept ; the father answered me :

“ Quick from the isle, thou worst of souls alive !

“ Begone : it is not right that I should send

“ Or convoy one detested by the Gods,

“ By the immortals hated : go ! avaunt ! ” 75

‘ So from his house he drove me groaning much ;

‘ Thence with afflicted heart we onward sailed.

‘ With the hard labour of the oar the crew

‘ Were harassed in our vain attempt, for now

‘ No longer prospect of return appeared.

‘ Six days we sailed along by night and day, 80

‘ And on the seventh to the lofty town

‘ Of Lamos came, to Læstrygonia,

‘ Having wide gates, where shepherd shepherd calls.

‘ A sleepless man there double wages earns,

‘ Part as a herdsman, part as tending sheep ; 85

‘ For of the day and night the paths approach.

‘ Then to the port we came ; an earth-fast range

‘ Of rock was fixed on either side ; the crags,

‘ Fronting each other, at the harbour’s mouth

‘ Projected, and th’ approach was difficult. 90

‘ Therein they all drew up their well-oared ships :

‘ They near each other in the hollow port

‘ Were moored, for never swelling wave was there,

‘ Or great or small, and all was calm around.

‘ But I alone my black ship kept outside 95

‘ The point, and bound the cables to the rock,
 ‘ And climbing stood upon the rocky peak.
 ‘ No works of oxen or of men appeared ;
 ‘ We only saw smoke rising from the ground.
 ‘ Then I my friends sent forward, to inquire 100
 ‘ Who the men were that lived upon the ground,
 ‘ Selecting two, and gave a herald third.
 ‘ They, disembarking on a flat road, went
 ‘ Where from the hills the cars brought wood to town.
 ‘ Outside they met a girl who water drew, 105
 ‘ Of Læstrygonian Antiphātus
 ‘ Fair daughter ; to the gently-flowing spring,
 ‘ Astracia, she was going, for from thence
 ‘ They used to bear the water to the town.
 ‘ Standing beside they spoke to her, and asked
 ‘ Who was their king ; who those o’er whom hereigned. 110
 ‘ She pointed out her father’s high-roofed house.
 ‘ Ent’ring the house they there a woman found,
 ‘ Big as a mountain-top, and hated her.
 ‘ She from the forum called Antiphatus,
 ‘ Her husband, and he planned their dreadful death. 115
 ‘ He quickly seized one and prepared a feast ;
 ‘ The other two came running to the ships.
 ‘ He through the city raised a cry ; in crowds
 ‘ Came forth the mighty Læstrygonians *giants*
 ‘ From ev’ry side, like giants not like men. 120
 ‘ With stones, a man’s load each, they pelted us
 ‘ From off the rocks, and loud the dreadful clang
 ‘ Of shattered ships and men destroyed arose ;
 ‘ Who made, like quiv’ring fish, a horrid feast.
 ‘ While they were killing those within the port, 125

‘ I drew my sharp sword from beside my thigh,
‘ And cut the cables of the dark-prowed ship ;
‘ And, urging my companions, bade them quick
‘ Lean to their oars that we might fate escape,
‘ And all, afraid of death, up-turned the sea.
‘ My ship fled gladly from the beetling rocks ; 130
‘ The others in a body perished there.
‘ Thence sailed we on, rejoiced to flee from death,
‘ Though grieved in heart for we had lost our friends,
‘ And reached Ææa’s isle, where Circe dwelt ;— 135
‘ A dreadful Goddess with a human voice,
‘ Own sister of Æætēs, baleful one,
‘ Born of the Sun, who light to mortals gives,
‘ And Perse, whom Oceanus begat.
‘ There with our ship we landed on the shore, 140
‘ With silence, in the port while some God led.
‘ There landing two days and two nights we lay,
‘ Wasting our minds with sorrow and fatigue.
‘ But when fair-haired Aurora brought the third,
‘ I took my spear and sword, and from the ship 145
‘ I climbed with speed a view-commanding rock,
‘ To look for men’s works or to hear their voice.
‘ When I had climbed the rocky height I paused :
‘ The smoke appeared, from off the wide-wayed ground,
‘ Of Circe’s house amid thick oaks and groves. 150
‘ I meditated in my heart and mind
‘ To go and ask, when I the dark smoke saw.
‘ And, while I thought, this seemed the better plan ;
‘ First to the swift ship and sea-shore to go,
‘ Give my friends food, and send them out to ask. 155
‘ But when I came near to the well-oared ship,

‘ Some God had pity on me thus alone,
‘ Who sent that way a mighty antlered stag.
‘ He from a shady pasture to a stream
‘ Went down to drink, for the sun’s force oppressed. 160
‘ As he came out I struck him on the back,
‘ Upon the spine ; the brazen spear pierced through ;
‘ Blaring he fell, and his life ebbd away.
‘ On him I stood and drew the brazen spear
‘ From out the wound, and laid it on the ground. 165
‘ Then willow-rods I plucked and pliant twigs,
‘ And twined a rope, about a fathom long,
‘ Wherewith I bound the mighty monster’s feet,
‘ From my head hung, and bore it to the ships,
‘ Leaning upon my spear, nor with one hand 170
‘ Could bear the weight ; so monstrous was the beast.
‘ I threw it down before the ship, and roused
‘ My friends, addressing each with honeyed words :
‘ “ My friends ! though grieved we shall not yet go down
‘ “ To Pluto’s house before the fated time ; 175
‘ “ But come ! while food and drink are in the ship
‘ “ Feast we, and not with hunger waste away.”

‘ I spake ; my orders quickly they obeyed,
‘ And with veiled face, beside the barren sea,
‘ Admired the stag, for ’twas a monstrous beast. 180
‘ When they were gratified with what they saw,
‘ They washed their hands and a grand feast prepared.
‘ All day we feasted, till the set of sun,
‘ On flesh abundant and delicious wine.
‘ But, when the sun went down and darkness came, 185
‘ Where the waves broke upon the shore we slept.
‘ When early rosy-fingered dawn appeared,

‘ I called a council, and addressed them all :

‘ “ Companions ! though afflicted hear my words :

‘ “ O friends ! we know not where is west or east, 190

‘ “ Nor where the men-enlight’ning sun goes down,

‘ “ Nor where he rises. But let us consult,

‘ “ If, though I think not, room for counsel is.

‘ “ For, when I climbed a view-commanding rock,

‘ “ I saw an isle which boundless sea surrounds. 195

‘ “ Level it lies, and with these eyes I saw

‘ “ The smoke arising ’mid thick oaks and groves.”

‘ I spake : their heart was crushed, remembering

‘ The Læstrygonian Antiphātus,

‘ And the fierce man-devouring Cyclops’ strength. 200

‘ They wept aloud and shed abundant tears,

‘ But ceased for ’twas of no avail to weep.

‘ Then all my well-greaved friends I counted out

‘ In two divisions, gave a chief to each ;

‘ O’er these I ruled, o’er those Eurylochus. 205

‘ Lots in a brazen helmet quick we shook ;

‘ That of Eurylochus sprang out the first :

‘ He hastened on, and with him twenty-two

‘ Went weeping, and left us in tears behind.

‘ The well-wrought house of Circe in the woods 210

‘ They found, of polished stones, conspicuous.

‘ Wolves and fierce lions were around, which she,

‘ By giving magic potions, had bewitched.

‘ They did not rush out to attack mankind,

‘ But, with their long tails waving, stood and fawned : 215

‘ As when their master coming from a feast

‘ His dogs caress, for honeyed scraps he brings ;

‘ So on them strong-clawed wolves and lions fawned,

‘ And they with fear beheld the dreadful beasts.
 ‘ In Circe’s, fair-haired Goddess’, porch they stood, 220
 ‘ And heard her singing with a lovely voice,
 ‘ The while she wove a large ambrosial web ;
 ‘ Such are the Goddesses’ fine graceful works.
 ‘ One who was chief among them thus began,
 ‘ Polites, nearest, dearest of my friends : 225
 ‘ “ Some one within the house, my friends ! a web
 ‘ “ Is weaving, singing with a lovely voice,
 ‘ “ And all the floor re-echoes ; if it be
 ‘ “ Goddess or woman, let us to her call.”
 ‘ So spake he to them, and they loudly called.
 ‘ She quickly came, threw wide the shining doors, 230
 ‘ And called them : foolishly they followed her ;
 ‘ Eurylochus remained, suspecting fraud.
 ‘ She led and placed them upon seats and thrones ;
 ‘ She mingled cheese and meal and honey fresh
 ‘ In Pramnian wine, and in the food infused 235
 ‘ Pernicious drugs, that they might home forget.
 ‘ When she had giv’n and they had drunk, she struck
 ‘ Them with a rod and shut them in a sty. *Circe tw*
 ‘ They had the heads, the voice, and hair and form *the*
 ‘ Of swine, but as before their mind remained. 240 *int*
 ‘ Thus, weeping, they were penned, and Circe threw
 ‘ Acorns, and beech-mast, and the cornel fruit
 ‘ To each ; such food as grov’ling swine consume.
 ‘ Quick to the black ship came Eurylochus
 ‘ To bring the news, and tell their dreadful fate ; 245
 ‘ But not one word, though eager, could he speak,
 ‘ Heart-struck with mighty grief ; his eyes with tears
 ‘ Were filled, and but to groans his thought inclined.

‘ Then of his other friends he told the fate : 250

‘ “ Illustrious Ulysses ! as thou bad’st

‘ “ We through the oak-groves went, and in the woods

‘ “ A fair house found we, made with polished stones,

‘ “ In a place seen from far ; and there was one

‘ “ Weaving a web, the while she sweetly sang,

‘ “ Goddess or woman ; and they loudly called. 255

‘ “ She quickly came, threw wide the shining doors

‘ “ And called them ; foolishly they followed her ;

‘ “ But I alone remained, suspecting fraud.

‘ “ They in a body disappeared ; not one

‘ “ Was to be seen ; I sate and long looked out.” 260

‘ He spake : my silver-hilted sword I placed,

‘ Great, brazen, o’er my shoulders, and my bow ;

‘ And bade him lead me quickly on the road.

‘ But with his hands he seized my knees and prayed :

‘ [And groaning spake to me these winged words] 265

‘ “ Take me not thither, noble prince ! against

‘ “ My will, but leave me here ; for well I know

‘ “ Thou’lt not return thyself, nor wilt bring back

‘ “ One of thy friends ! but let us quickly flee,

‘ “ With the men here, for we may still escape.”

‘ So spake he : I addressed him in reply : 270

‘ “ Eurylochus ! stay here in this same place,

‘ “ Eating and drinking by the hollow ship ;

‘ “ But I will go, for great the need I should.”

‘ Thus speaking, from the ship and sea I went,

‘ And, passing through the thickets, nearly reached 275

‘ The house of Circe, skilled in many drugs.

‘ There met me Hermes, of the golden rod,

‘ As I approached it, seeming like a youth

- ‘ With his first beard, a very graceful age.
‘ He grasped my hand, and then addressed me thus :
‘ “ Whither, unhappy man ! across the heights, 280
‘ “ A stranger to the country, goest thou ?
‘ “ Thy friends are here, shut up in Circe’s house
‘ “ Like swine, confined in thickly crowded pens.
‘ “ Art come to rescue them ? I do not think
‘ “ Thou wouldst return, but stay here like the rest. 285
‘ “ But I will free and save thee from these woes :
‘ “ Here, take this potent drug, and with it go
‘ “ To Circe’s house ; its force will fate repel.
‘ “ I’ll tell thee what are her pernicious deeds :
‘ “ She’ll make a mixture ; in thy food put drugs, 290
‘ “ But not bewitch thee, for the drug I give
‘ “ Will hinder this. Now I will all recite :
‘ “ When with her long rod Circe strikes thee, draw
‘ “ The sharp sword from thy thigh, and onward rush
‘ “ As if to slay her ; she, alarmed, will try 295
‘ “ With love to soothe thee : do not thou consent,
‘ “ Till she has loosed thy friends and cared for thee.
‘ “ Bid her the great oath of the Gods to swear,
‘ “ That she will plan no other harm for thee, 300
‘ “ Nor will unman thee, of thine armour stripped.”
‘ Thus Argeiphontes spake, and gave the drug
‘ Drawn from the earth, and showed its properties.
‘ Its root was black, its flower resembled milk :
‘ Gods call it Moly ; difficult for men 305
‘ To dig it ; but the Gods can all things do.
‘ Then to the high Olympus Hermes went
‘ Across the isle, but I to Circe’s house ;
‘ And much my heart was troubled as I went.

- ‘ Near to the fair-haired Goddess’ gates I stood 310
‘ And shouted loud ; the Goddess heard my voice,
‘ And, coming forth, threw wide the shining gates,
‘ And called me: I afflicted followed her.
‘ She on a well-wrought silver-studded throne
‘ Placed me ; a footstool was beneath my feet ; 315
‘ And in a golden cup mixed what I might drink,
‘ And put with crafty thought a drug therein.
‘ She gave ; I drank ; nor did she me bewitch,
‘ When, striking with a rod, she me addressed :
‘ “ Go to the styè ; lie with thine other friends : ” 320
‘ She spake : my sharp sword drawing from my thigh,
‘ As if to slay her, I on Circe rushed :
‘ She screamed, and fled aside, and seized my knees,
‘ And weeping spake to me these winged words :
‘ “ Who art thou ? whence ? what city, parents thine ? 325
‘ “ I wonder thou hast drunk these drugs, nor art
‘ “ Bewitched : no other man whoe’er has drunk,
‘ “ And let them pass the barrier of his teeth,
‘ “ Has borne against them : but within thy breast
‘ “ There is a mind against enchantment proof.
‘ “ Ulysses sure thou art, of much resource, 330
‘ “ Whom Hermes of the golden rod announced
‘ “ To come, returning in his ship from Troy.
‘ “ Come, put thy sword within its sheath, that we
‘ “ May on this couch ascend, and each with each
‘ “ Pledges of love and friendship interchange.” 335
‘ She spoke ; but I addressed her thus and said :
‘ “ Circe ! how bid me to be kind to thee,
‘ “ When in thine house thou’st changed my friends to
swine ?

- ‘ “ How bid me, now thou hast me here with craft,
‘ “ Go to thy chamber and ascend thy couch, 340
‘ “ To make me there disarmed, unmanly, base ?
‘ “ But never would I to thy couch ascend
‘ “ Unless, O Goddess ! thou a mighty oath
‘ “ Wouldst swear, nor death nor other ill to plan.”
‘ I spake ; she sware the oath as I desired. 345
‘ When she had sworn and made the oath complete,
‘ Then I ascended Circe’s beauteous couch.
‘ Four maids meanwhile were toiling in the hall,
‘ Who were the menial servants of the house :
‘ They were the daughters of the springs and groves 350
‘ And sacred rivers flowing to the sea.
‘ One of them placed fair carpets on the thrones,
‘ Purple above, and linen laid beneath.
‘ Another, tables spread before the thrones,
‘ Silver, and on them golden baskets placed. 355
‘ A third mixed honeyed wine within a bowl
‘ Of silver, and the golden cups arranged.
‘ A fourth brought water and made fire to burn
‘ Beneath a tripod ; and the water boiled.
‘ When she the water in the shining brass 360
‘ Had boiled, she poured it, having made me sit,
‘ Into a cauldron from the tripod large,
‘ Pleasantly blending, down my head and arms,
‘ That from my limbs she might remove fatigue.
‘ When she had bathed me and with olive oil
‘ Anointed, a fair vest she round me threw 365
‘ And tunic ; to a silver-studded throne,
‘ Fair and well-wrought, she led, and made me sit
‘ Thereon : (a footstool was beneath my feet) ;

- ‘ [From a fair golden ewer a maiden filled
‘ A bowl, above a silver cauldron placed,
‘ To wash, and laid a polished table near. 370
‘ A venerable housekeeper brought bread,
‘ Piling up divers eates in full supply,]
‘ And bade me eat : this pleased me not, for I
‘ Had other thoughts ; my mind foreboded ill.
‘ When Circe saw me sit, nor throw my hands 375
‘ Upon the food, as having mighty grief,
‘ By me she stood, and spoke these winged words :
‘ “ Why sit, Ulysses ! like a voiceless man,
‘ “ Thy mind consuming but not food nor drink ? 380
‘ “ Fraud thou suspectest ; but thou oughtest not
‘ “ To fear, for I have sworn a mighty oath.”
‘ She spake, and I addressed her in reply :
‘ “ Circe ! what man, who had his feelings right,
‘ “ Would have the spirit or to eat or drink
‘ “ Ere he released his friends and saw them free ? 385
‘ “ If really thou wouldst bid me eat and drink
‘ “ Free them, and let me my dear friends behold.”
‘ I spake, and Circe went from out the hall,
‘ Holding a rod, and oped the swine-cote door,
‘ And drove them forth, like porkers in their prime. 390
‘ They stood in front of her ; she through them went,
‘ And upon each besmeared another drug.
‘ Down from their limbs the bristles fell, which erst
‘ The horrid drug which Circe gave had caused ;
‘ And men they were, more youthful than before, 395
‘ Much handsomer and nobler to behold.
‘ They knew me ; each came clinging to my hand,
‘ And happy lamentation came on all.

‘ The house resounded ; e’en the Goddess’ self
 ‘ Felt pity, and thus standing by me said : 400

“ Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !

“ Now to the swift ship and the sea-shore go ;

“ Draw first of all the ship upon the land ;

“ Your goods and tackling in the caverns place,

“ And thou return, and bring thymuch-loved friends.” 405

‘ So spake she, and my noble mind complied.

‘ I hasted to the swift ship and the shore,

‘ And by the ship my dear companions found

‘ Piteously groaning, shedding frequent tears.

‘ As when stalled calves, around the herded cows 410

‘ To the farm-yard returning filled with grass,

‘ Leap forth to meet them, nor do pens restrain,

‘ But bleating round their mothers run in crowds ;

‘ So they, when they beheld me with their eyes,

‘ Rushed weeping to me ; and their thought appeared

‘ To be as though they had already come 415

‘ To their paternal country, to the town

‘ In Ithaca where they were bred and born,

‘ And weeping spoke to me these winged words :

“ O noble prince ! we joy in thy return,

“ As though arrived at Ithaca our home. 420

“ But of our other friends recite the fate.”

‘ They spoke ; and I with gentle words replied :

“ First let us draw the ship upon the land ;

“ Our goods and tackling in the caverns place.

“ But hasten, that you all may follow me, 425

“ And see our friends, in Circe’s sacred house,

“ Eating and drinking : they have full supply ! ”

‘ I spake : they quickly all obeyed my words :

- ‘ Eurylochus alone restrained my friends,
‘ [And then addressed them with these winged words :]
‘ “ Whither unhappy go we ? and why court 430
‘ “ These ills, that we to Circe’s house should go ?
‘ “ To swine, wolves, lions she will turn us all,
‘ “ To guard her great house by necessity.
‘ “ So Cyclops caught our friends when to his lair 435
‘ “ They went ; the brave Ulysses followed them,
‘ “ And they too died by his fool-hardiness.”
‘ He spoke ; and I debated in my mind
‘ If I should draw my long sword from my thigh,
‘ Cut off his head, and dash it on the ground, 440
‘ Though near in kindred to me ; but my friends
‘ With honeyed words on all sides held me back.
‘ “ O noble prince ! we will then leave him here,
‘ “ Shouldst thou command, to stay and guard the
ship ;
‘ “ But lead us on to Circe’s sacred house.” 445
‘ Thus speaking from the ship and sea they went ;
‘ Nor by the ship Eurylochus was left,
‘ But followed, for he feared my stern rebuke.
‘ Circe, meanwhile, my other friends with care
‘ Bathed and with oil anointed in her house : 450
‘ Around them vests and fleecy tunics threw,
‘ And in the house we found all feasting well.
‘ When they perceived each other, face to face,
‘ They wept and wailed ; the house was filled with
groans.
‘ The Goddess standing near me thus addressed : 455
‘ “ [Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !]
‘ “ No longer make such groaning ; I too know

“ What griefs ye suffered in the (fishy sea,)
“ And how fierce men have injured you ashore.
“ But come now, eat the food and drink the wine, 460
“ Till ye regain your mind within your breast,
“ Such as ye had when at the first ye left
“ Your native soil of Ithaca ; but now
“ Exhausted, heartless, your sad wandering
“ Ye always think upon ; nor is your mind
“ At ease, for ye have suffered many woes.” 465

‘ Thus spoke she, and our noble mind agreed.
‘ There, day by day, for a whole year we stayed,
‘ Feasting on flesh abundant, and sweet wine.
‘ But when the year was o’er and hours revolved
‘ [Of waning months, and the long days were done],
‘ My dear companions summoned me and said : 470
“ Thoughtless ! bethink thee of thy fatherland,
“ If it be fate that thou be saved, and go
“ Home to thy high-roofed house and fatherland.”

‘ [So spake they, and my noble mind agreed. 475
‘ All day we feasted, till the set of sun,
‘ On flesh abundant and delicious wine :
‘ But when the sun went down and darkness came,
‘ They went to sleep within the shady halls].
‘ Then I, ascending Circe’s beauteous couch, 480
‘ Embraced her knees and prayed ; she heard my
voice :

“ Circe ! perform the promise thou hast made
“ To send me home : now eager is my mind,
“ And of my friends, who waste their hearts away, 485
“ Wailing to me when thou art absent far.”

‘ I spake : the Goddess forthwith answered me :

‘ “ Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !
 ‘ “ No longer stay unwilling in my house.
 ‘ “ But first another journey ye must make ; 490
 ‘ “ To Pluto’s and dread Proserpine’s abode
 ‘ “ Must go, and of Tiresias of Thebes
 ‘ “ The soul consult, blind prophet, of strong mind,
 ‘ “ Whom Proserpine endues alone, though dead,
 ‘ “ With mind and thought ; the rest as shadows
 glide.” 495

‘ So spake she ; but my very heart was crushed ;
 ‘ And sitting on the couch I wept ; my mind
 ‘ No longer wished to live nor sun’s light see,
 ‘ With weeping and forebodings overwhelmed.
 ‘ I with these words addressed her in reply : 500
 ‘ “ O Circe ! who shall guide me on this road
 ‘ “ To Hades, whither no man ever sailed ?”

‘ I spake : the Goddess thus replied and said :
 ‘ “ Ulysses ! wise ! of brave Laertes son !
 ‘ “ Let not the absence of a guide on board 505
 ‘ “ Distress thee : rear the mast, the white sails
 spread ;
 ‘ “ Sit, and the north wind’s breeze will bear the ship.
 ‘ “ But when thou o’er Oceanus hast sailed,
 ‘ “ A narrow beach, the groves of Proserpine,
 ‘ “ Tall poplars, willows with’ring quick their fruit, 510
 ‘ “ Are there, and there to anchor bring thy ship
 ‘ “ In the Oceanus with gulfy stream ;
 ‘ “ And go thyself to Pluto’s dark abode.
 ‘ “ There Pyriphlegethon, Cocytus there,
 ‘ “ Off-stream of Styx, flow down to Acheron :
 ‘ “ Of two hoarse streams a rock’s the confluence. 515

“ Then, hero ! going close, as I command,
“ Dig thou a trench, a cubit ev’ry way,
“ And pour libation in to all the dead ;
“ With honey-mixture first, with sweet wine next,
“ With water third ; and white meal strew thereon ;
“ And of the dead implore the nerveless heads, 520
“ Vowing to give them, when to Ithaca
“ Thou’rt come, a barren cow, within thine house
“ The choicest, and with dainties fill a pyre.
“ Vow to Tiresias to sacrifice
“ Apart a black sheep, best among your flocks. 525
“ When thou the noble nations of the dead
“ With prayer hast supplicated, offer up
“ A black ewe lamb, and, toward Erebus
“ Turning its head, do thou avert thyself
“ As going to the river’s stream, and there
“ Of dead men’s bodies many souls will come. 530
“ Then thy companions urgently command
“ [The sheep which lie there slaughtered by the sword],
“ To flay and burn, and to the Gods make prayer ;
“ To mighty Pluto and dread Proserpine.
“ Draw thou thy sharp sword from beside thy thigh,
“ And sit, nor let the dead men’s nerveless heads 535
“ Come near the blood, ere of Tiresias
“ Thou hast inquiry made ; the soothsayer
“ Quick will arrive, and, noble chief ! to thee
“ Thy way and what the distance he will tell,
“ And thy return upon the fishy sea.” 540

‘ She spoke, and golden-throned Aurora came.
‘ Then she placed round me tunic, cloak, and vests :
‘ The nymph a robe of silv’ry whiteness took,

- ‘Slender and graceful ; put around her waist
‘A golden belt ; upon her head a veil. 545
‘I through the house went and urged on my friends
‘With honeyed words, as by each man I stood :
‘“No longer slumb’ring in sweet sleep indulge,
‘“But let us go ; for Circe gives command.”
‘So spake I, and their noble mind agreed. 550
‘Yet not e’en thence I scatheless led my friends.
‘Elpēnor was the youngest ; was not brave
‘In war, nor was he strong in intellect.
‘He from his friends afar in Circe’s house,
‘Courting the cool air, lay oppressed with wine. 555
‘The noise and tumult of his friends astir
‘He heard, and rising suddenly forgot
‘With backward step the high stair to descend,
‘But from the roof fell headlong down ; his neck
‘Was broken, and his soul to Pluto went. 560
‘As they were coming I addressed them thus :
‘“Ye think to go to fatherland and home,
‘“But Circe points another road ; to go
‘“To Pluto’s and dead Proserpine’s abode,
‘“And of Tiresias consult the shade.” 565
‘So spake I ; but their very heart was crushed ;
‘And sitting down they groaned and tore their hair ;
‘But yet it was of no avail to weep.
‘When grieving to the swift ship and the shore,
‘And pouring down abundant tears, we came, 570
‘Then to the black ship Circe went, and bound
‘A black ewe lamb therein, and passed by all
‘With ease ; for who could see against his will
‘A God, if this or that way he may go ?’

BOOK XI.

' BUT to the ship and sea when we had come,
 ' First to the sea divine our ship we drew,
 ' And in the black ship placed the mast and sails.
 ' We put the sheep on board, and we ourselves
 ' Went grieving, pouring down abundant tears. 5
 ' Circe, dread Goddess with a human voice,
 ' Sent us, behind the dark-prowed ship, a breeze,
 ' Fair and that filled our sails, companion good.
 ' Placing with toil the tackling in the ship
 ' We sate; the wind and steersman drove us straight;
 ' The sails, as all day long it sped, were stretched;
 ' And the sun set and all the ways were dark.
 ' It reached the shores of deep Oceanus:
 ' Of the Cimmerian men the race and town
 ' Were there, in mist and cloud enwrapped; the sun
 ' Never looks down upon them with its rays, 15
 ' Nor when it marches up the starry sky,
 ' Nor when from heaven it turns again to earth;
 ' But over wretched men sad night is spread.
 ' Arrived we moored the ship, and disembarked
 ' The sheep; the river of Oceanus, 20
 ' Skirting the place that Circe named, we reached.
 ' There Perimēdes and Eurylochos
 ' The victims held; my sharp sword from my thigh
 ' I drew, and scooped a trench a cubit wide. 25
 ' I poured libation in to all the dead,
 ' With honey-mixture first, with sweet wine next,
 ' With water third; and white meal strewed thereon;

‘ And of the dead implored the nerveless heads,
‘ Vowing to give them, when to Ithaca
‘ I came, a barren cow, within the house 30
‘ The choicest, and with dainties fill a pyre ;
‘ And to Tiresias to sacrifice,
‘ Apart, a black sheep, best among my flocks.
‘ When I the nations of the dead with vows
‘ And prayers had supplicated, of the sheep 35
‘ I cut the throats above the trench ; black blood
‘ Flowed forth therein : beneath from Erebus
‘ The souls of dead men’s bodies came in crowds,
‘ Maids, bachelors, laborious old men,
‘ Young tender girls with hearts to sorrow new,
‘ And many war-slain men, by brazen spears 40
‘ Wounded, and bearing armour stained with gore.
‘ In crowds around the trench from every side,
‘ With awful cries, they flocked ; awe seized my mind.
‘ Then my companions urgently I bade
‘ The sheep, which lay there slaughtered by the sword,
‘ To flay and burn, and to the Gods make prayer : 45
‘ To mighty Pluto and dread Proserpine.
‘ I drew my sharp sword from beside my thigh,
‘ And sate, nor let the dead men’s nerveless heads
‘ Come near the blood, ere of Tiresias,
‘ The soothsayer, I had inquiry made. 50
‘ First of our friend Elpenor came the soul ;
‘ For he had not been buried in the earth :
‘ His body we had left in Circe’s halls,
‘ Unwept, unburied ; other labour prest.
‘ Him when I saw I wept and pitied him ; 55
‘ And, speaking thus, with winged words addressed :

- “ Elpenor ! how beneath the darksome shade
“ Com’st thou, on foot outstripping me by ship ? ”
 ‘ I spoke, and groaning thus he answered me :
“ [Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !] 60
“ Me evil fate and cursed wine destroyed.
“ Asleep in Circe’s palace I forgot
“ With backward step the high stair to descend,
“ But from the roof fell headlong down ; my neck
“ Was broken, and to Pluto’s house I went. 65
“ Now by those left behind, who are not here,
“ I pray thee ; by thy wife, and by thy sire
“ Who brought thee up when thou wert but a child ;
“ And by Telemachus, thine only one,
“ Whom thou hast left at home : I know that thou
“ When going hence from Pluto’s house wilt moor
“ On the *Ææan* isle thy well-wrought ship : 70
“ There then, O king ! I bid thee think on me.
“ Unwept, unburied leave me not behind,
“ Lest I be cause of anger from the Gods,
“ But burn me with my arms, whate’er they be,
“ And heap a mound upon the white sea’s shore 75
“ To a grieved man, for future men to hear.
“ This do for me, and fix upon the mound
“ The oar I living rowed with ’mong my friends.”
 ‘ He spake, and I addressed him in reply :
“ This, O unhappy man ! I will perform.” 80
 ‘ Thus interchanging mournful words we sate ;
‘ I holding o’er the blood my sword apart,
‘ And talking much, my friend’s shade opposite.
‘ Then next the soul of my dead mother came,
‘ Anticlea, child of Autolycus, 85

- ‘ Whom I left living when I went to Troy.
 ‘ Her when I saw I wept and pitied her.
 ‘ Yet not e’en so, though overwhelmed with grief,
 ‘ Did I permit her to approach the blood
 ‘ Ere I inquired of Tiresias.
 ‘ The soul then of Tiresias approached 90
 ‘ With staff of gold ; he knew me and addressed :
 ‘ “ [Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !]
 ‘ “ The sun’s light leaving, why, unhappy man !
 ‘ “ Com’st thou the dead and their sad land to see ?
 ‘ “ But from the trench retire ; put up thy sword, 95
 ‘ “ That I may drink the blood and tell thee true.”
 ‘ He spake, and I my silver-hilted sword
 ‘ Put back, and in the scabbard fixed ; he drank
 ‘ The blood, and thus the blameless prophet spake :
 ‘ “ Illustrious Ulysses ! sweet return 100
 ‘ “ Thou seekest ; God will make it difficult.
 ‘ “ I do not think that Neptune will forget
 ‘ “ The anger he implanted in his mind,
 ‘ “ Enraged that thou hast blinded his dear son ;
 ‘ “ Yet even so, though suff’ring, ye may go,
 ‘ “ If thine own mind and of thy friends thou wilt 105
 ‘ “ Restrain, when first thy well-made ship thou bring’st
 ‘ “ To the Trinacrian isle, in flight across
 ‘ “ The azure sea, and findest feeding there
 ‘ “ The oxen and the fat sheep of the sun,
 ‘ “ Who all things overlooks and all things hears :
 ‘ “ These if thou hurt not, hoping for return, 110
 ‘ “ To Ithaca, though suff’ring, ye may go :
 ‘ “ But shouldst thou hurt them, ruin I forebode
 ‘ “ To ship and friends ; and though thou mayst escape

- “Thyself, thou’lt late, unhappily, return,
“Losing thy friends, upon a stranger’s ship
“Conveyed, and find calamities at home ; 115
“Proud men who, while thy substance they devour,
“Woo thy good wife and give her spousal gifts.
“Yet coming thou their outrage wilt repay ;
“But when the suitors in thine house thou hast,
“By craft or openly by sword, destroyed, 120
“Go afterwards, and take a broad-palmed oar,
“Until thou com’st to men who do not know
“The sea, nor eat their victuals mixed with salt,
“Nor know they ships whose sides are painted red,
“Nor the broad oars which are the wings of ships. 125
“Clear sign I tell thee which will not deceive :
“When thee some other traveller shall meet,
“And say thou bear’st a fan to winnow corn
“Upon thy noble shoulder, fix the oar
“Upon the ground, and to king Neptune make 130
“Fair sacrifice ; a lamb, a bull, a boar.
“Then home return, and sacred hecatombs
“Give to the Gods who in the wide sky dwell,
“To all of them in order : from the sea
“Death without violence will on thee come, 135
“To kill thee, by a prosperous old age
“Weighed down ; contented will thy subjects be
“Around thee ; this unerringly I tell.”
“He spoke, and I addressed him in reply :
“Tiresias ! ’tis this the Gods themselves
“Have fated ; but this tell and tell me true : 140
“Here I the soul of my dead mother see,
“Who sits in silence near the blood, nor dares

- “ To look upon her son, nor speak a word ;
“ Say, king ! how she may know me yet alive ? ”
“ I spoke, and he addressed me in reply : 145
“ With ease I’ll tell and make thee understand.
“ Whomever of the dead thou dost permit
“ The blood to come near, he will tell thee truth ;
“ Whom thou rejectest he will back retire.”
“ The soul of king Tiresias thus spake
“ In prophecy, and went to Pluto’s house. 150
“ But I stood firm until my mother came ;
“ She drank the black blood and she knew me then,
“ And wailing spake to me these winged words :
“ My son ! how com’st thou ’neath the gloomy shade 155
“ Alive ? ’tis hard for living men to see
“ These things : great streams, dire torrents intervene :
“ Oceanus the first, which none can pass
“ [On foot nor if he have a well-wrought ship].
“ Hither how com’st thou, wandering from Troy 160
“ Long time with ship and friends ? hast thou not been
“ To Ithaca, nor seen thy wife at home ? ”
“ She spake and I addressed her in reply :
“ My mother ! urgent need has brought me down
“ To Pluto’s house, to ask an oracle
“ Of the soul of Tiresias of Thebes. 165
“ I have not Greece approached, nor mine own land
“ Have trode on, but have wandered, woe-begone,
“ Since Agamemnon I accompanied
“ To well-horsed Troy, with Trojan men to fight.
“ But come now tell me this and tell me true : 170
“ What fate of death’s long sleep has thee subdued ?
“ Was it a lingering disease, or did

- “ The archeress Diana, with mild darts
“ Attacking, slay thee? tell me too about
“ My father, and the son I left; my royalty,— 175
“ Rests it with them or has some other man
“ Gained it, and said that I shall ne’er return?
“ Tell me the counsels of my wedded wife:
“ Stays she to guard the boy and keep all safe?
“ Or is she married to some Grecian chief?”
 ‘ I spake; my venerable mother said: 180
“ She in thine house full well with patient mind
“ Abides; but always grievous nights and days
“ Waste her, the while she weeps; thy royalty
“ None else obtains; Telemachus at peace
“ Directs thy lands, and shares the equal feasts 185
“ Which it befits a law-giver to join,
“ For all invite him; in the country still
“ Thy father stays, nor to the town descends.
“ Couches, beds, vests, and shining coverlids
“ Are not for him; he in the winter sleeps 190
“ Where sleep the servants in the house, in dust
“ Close to the fire; and puts mean raiment on.
“ But when the summer and rich autumn come,
“ Somewhere within the vineyard’s nook, his bed
“ Of fallen leaves is laid upon the ground.
“ There sorrowing he lies, and in his mind 195
“ Nurses his grief and longs for thy return,
“ While burthensome old age upon him comes.
“ And I there also died and met my fate;
“ Diana, aiming surely, slew me not
“ With her mild darts attacking in the house,
“ Nor did disease come on me, which so oft 200

“ “Wastes by its sad decline the life away ;
 “ “’Twas my regret for thee, my care for thee,
 “ “My tender feeling for thee, noble son !
 “ “That took my life, as honey sweet, away.”

each of mother

‘ She spake ; but I with eagerness desired
 ‘ Of my dead mother to embrace the shade. 205
 ‘ I thrice rushed on ; my soul compelled th’ embrace ;
 ‘ Thrice, like a shadow or a dream, my grasp
 ‘ She fled, and more grief agonised my heart.
 ‘ Then I addressed her with these winged words :
 ‘ “ My mother ! why not wait for me, who am 210
 ‘ “ So eager to embrace thee, that e’en here
 ‘ “ In Hades we may twine our loving hands,
 ‘ “ And with cold sorrow both be satisfied ?
 ‘ “ Or does the noble Proserpine but raise
 ‘ “ Some phantom, that I more may grieve and wail ? ”
 ‘ I spake : my venerable mother said : 215
 ‘ “ Ah me ! my child, ill-fated above all !
 ‘ “ Jove’s daughter, Proserpine, beguiles thee not ;
 ‘ “ This is the lot of mortals who are dead :
 ‘ “ Muscles no more enwrap their flesh and bones ;
 ‘ “ These the fierce rage of burning fire subdues, 220
 ‘ “ When first the life the whit’ning bones deserts ;
 ‘ “ The soul flies flutt’ring like a dream away.
 ‘ “ Be eager for the light, but learn all this
 ‘ “ That thou mayst after tell it to thy wife.”
 ‘ “ Thus we conversed ; and then the women came, 225
 ‘ For noble Proserpine had urged those on
 ‘ Who were the wives and daughters of the chiefs ;
 ‘ And round the blood they thickly came in crowds.
 ‘ I was in doubt how I should question each ;

- ‘ This to my mind appeared the wisest plan ; 230
‘ I drew my long sword from my stalwart thigh,
‘ Nor let them all at once the black blood drink.
‘ They in succession came, and each of them
‘ Declared her family ; I questioned them :
‘ Tyro of noble father first I saw, 235
‘ Who of Salmōneus claimed to be the child ;
‘ Said of Æolian Cretheus she was wife :
‘ She loved Enīpeus, stream divine, most fair
‘ Of all the rivers on the earth that flow ;
‘ And to Enīpeus’ stream she often went. 240
‘ The earth-surrounding Neptune, in his form,
‘ Wooed her and won her at the river’s mouth ;
‘ A wave rose round them as a mountain high,
‘ And curling hid the woman and the God.
‘ [Her zone he loosed, and on her poured sweet sleep]. 245
‘ The God, before the river’s mouth he left,
‘ Clung to her hand and with these words addressed :
‘ “ Be happy, lady ! in thy love, and, when
‘ “ The year revolves, fair babes thou shalt produce ;
‘ “ Of the immortals not unfruitful are
‘ “ The loves ; but thou protect and nurse them well. 250
‘ “ Go home now, and be silent ; no one name,
‘ “ But know that I earth-shaking Neptune am.”
‘ He spake, and sank beneath the wavy sea :
‘ To Pelias and Neleus she gave birth ;
‘ Both were brave servants of the mighty Jove : 255
‘ In wide Iolchos Pelias abode,
‘ Rich in his flocks and herds ; the other dwelt
‘ In sandy Pylos : other offspring too
‘ His royal lady did to Cretheus bear,

‘Æson and Pheres and Amythaon.

‘I saw Antiope, Æsopus’ child, 260

‘Who, boasting to have had the love of Jove,

‘To him Amphion, Zethus, twin sons, bore.

‘The seven-gated Thebes they founded first,

‘And fortified; they could not dwell in Thebes

‘Unfortified, however brave they were. 265

‘Alcmena next, wife of Amphitryon,

‘I saw there, who gave birth to Hercules,

‘Man firmly valiant with a lion’s heart,

‘Responding to the love of mighty Jove.

‘And haughty Creon’s daughter, Megara,

‘Wife of Amphitryon’s unconquered son. 270

‘The mother too of Œdipus I saw,

‘Fair Epicastè, who, in ignorance

‘Of mind, committed an atrocity;

‘Married her own son, who had killed his sire;

‘And this the Gods have made notorious.

‘He, suff’ring sorrows, the Cadmeans ruled 275

‘In fair Thebes, through the Gods’ pernicious plans.

‘To Pluto’s house, strong keeper of the gates,

‘A noose suspending from the lofty roof,

‘O’erwhelmed by grief, she went and left to him

‘Afflictions, which his mother’s Furies wrought. 280

‘And Chloris, very beautiful, I saw,

‘Whom Neleus for her beauty erst espoused,

‘Giving innumerable marriage gifts,

‘The youngest daughter of Amphion, son

‘Of Iasus, who once was mighty king

‘Over the Minyan Orchomenos.

‘She, queen of Pylos, bore him noble sons; 285

- ‘ Nestor, Chromius, Periclymenos ;
 ‘ Pero she bore besides, admired by men,
 ‘ Whom all around her wooed ; but not to one
 ‘ Would Neleus give her, if he did not drive
 ‘ The slowly-trailing beeves with foreheads broad,
 ‘ Hard to be tamed, of noble Iphiclus, 290
 ‘ From Phylace. A famous soothsayer
 ‘ Promised alone to drive them ; but stern fate
 ‘ And fetters hard to break, and herdsmen fierce,
 ‘ Enchained him. When the months and days were past
 ‘ Of the revolving year, and hours came on, 295
 ‘ The noble Iphiclus then set him free,
 ‘ Telling the future ; and Jove’s will was done.
 ‘ Leda I saw, the wife of Tyndarus ;
 ‘ To Tyndarus she bore two valiant sons, *el. my*
 ‘ Horse-taming Castor, Pollux good with fists ; 300
 ‘ Whom both alive the fertile earth absorbed,
 ‘ Honoured by Jove, although beneath the earth.
 ‘ Alternate days they live, alternate die,
 ‘ And have an honour equal to the Gods.
 ‘ Iphimedīa next, Alōeus’ wife, 305
 ‘ I saw ; she claimed by Neptune to be loved,
 ‘ And bore two sons, but of short life they were,
 ‘ Brave Otus, Ephialtes far renowned ;
 ‘ The tallest men the fertile earth maintained,
 ‘ And, next renowned Orion, fairest far. 310
 ‘ When they were nine years old they were in breadth
 ‘ Nine cubits ; but nine fathoms were in height.
 ‘ They in Olympus threatened with the Gods
 ‘ To raise the combat of impetuous war ;
 ‘ Upon Olympus Ossa they essayed 315

' To place, on Ossa woody Pelion,
 ' That so the sky might be accessible ;
 ' And would have done it, had they manhood reached ;
 ' But Jove's son, whom fair-haired Latona bare,
 ' Destroyed them both, before upon their cheeks
 ' The hair had grown and clothed their chins with down. 320

' Phædra and Procris, Ariadne fair,
 ' Sagacious Minos' daughter, next I saw ;
 ' Whom Theseus took away from Crete, and brought
 ' To sacred Athens' land, nor her enjoyed,
 ' For first Diana slew her in the isle
 ' Of Dia, from what Bacchus testified. 325

' Mæra and Clymene I saw, and her,
 ' The hateful Eriphyle, who received
 ' For her dear husband gold of costly price.
 ' I could not all of them recite or name,
 ' The heroes' wives and daughters, whom I saw.
 ' Ambrosial night would fail ; it is the hour 330
 ' To sleep ; on board, if going to my friends,
 ' Or here : my convoy's for the Gods and you.'

He spake : they all in perfect silence sate,
 For they were spell-bound in the shady halls.
 White-armed Arêtè then began the speech : 335

' What, ye Phæacians ! think ye of this man,
 ' His form and stature and well-balanced mind ?
 ' He is my guest, but each the honour shares.
 ' Send him not off in haste, nor stint your gifts
 ' To one who needs them so ; for in your halls, 340
 ' By the God's will, are many treasures laid.'

To them the aged Echinëus spoke,
 The oldest man of the Phæacians.

‘ Friends ! not beside the mark or what we think
‘ Speaks the wise queen ; comply ye, but hereon 345
‘ Both word and deed rest with Alcinous.’

To him Alcinous replied and said :

‘ This shall be so, if I but live and rule
‘ O’er the Phæacians who delight in oars.
‘ But let our guest, though anxious for return, 350
‘ Wait till to-morrow, that I may complete
‘ Our gift ; the convoy is the care of men,
‘ Of all, and most of me who rule the land.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ Alcinous ! of all the people chief ! 355
‘ If ye should bid me stay here for a year,
‘ Prepare a convoy, and rich gifts bestow ;
‘ I would consent ; and ’twould much better be
‘ With fuller hand to my dear land to go,
‘ With more esteem and friendship from the men 360
‘ Who witness my return to Ithaca.’

To him Alcinous replied and said :

‘ Ulysses ! when we saw we did thee not
‘ With an impostor or a thief compare ;
‘ And many such as these the black earth feeds, 365
‘ Men widely spread abroad, devising lies,
‘ From what source coming none can see : with thee
‘ Thy form of language and thy mind are good :
‘ Wisely thy tale, as bard might, thou hast told,
‘ The woes of all the Argives and thine own.
‘ But come now, tell me this, and tell me true ; 370
‘ If any of thy god-like friends thou saw’st,
‘ Who followed thee to Troy and perished there.
‘ The night is very long, immense ; not yet

- ‘ The hour for sleeping in the house is come.
‘ Tell me thy wondrous tales, for I would wait
‘ E’en till the morn divine, if in the house 375
‘ Thou couldst endure thy sorrows to recite.’
The wise Ulysses answered him and said :
‘ Alcinous ! of all the people chief !
‘ There is a time for words, a time for sleep.
‘ If thou wouldst hear them, I would not refuse 380
‘ To tell thee other sorrows of my friends,
‘ Even more pitiful than these ; of other woes
‘ Of my companions, who, on their return,
‘ Scaping indeed the grievous Trojan fight,
‘ By a bad woman’s instigation died.
‘ Now when chaste Proserpine the women’s souls, 385
‘ Some one way, some another, had dispersed,
‘ The soul of Agamemnon, Atreus’ son,
‘ Came grieving ; others were collected round,
‘ Who in Ægisthus’ house with him had died.
‘ He knew me, soon as he the black blood drank, 390
‘ And groaned aloud, and shed a frequent tear,
‘ Stretching his hands desirous mine to clasp ;
‘ But there was in him no more strength or force
‘ Such as before was in his supple limbs.
‘ I when I saw him wept, and in my mind 395
‘ Pitied, and spoke to him these winged words :
‘ “ O noble Agamemnon ! king of men !
‘ “ What fate of death’s long sleep has thee subdued ?
‘ “ Did Neptune kill thee in the ships, a storm
‘ “ Immense arousing of the boist’rous winds ? 400
‘ “ Or did fierce men do violence ashore,
‘ “ While thou wert cutting off their beeves and flocks

“Of sheep, or fighting for their town and wives?”

‘So spake I, and he thus forthwith replied:

“Ulysses! wise! Laertes’ noble son! 405

“Me neither Neptune in the ships subdued,

“A storm arousing of the boist’rous winds,

“Nor fierce men did me violence ashore.

“For me Ægisthus death and fate devised,

“Leagued with my murd’rous wife, and, to his house 410

“Inviting, while he feasted slew me there,

“As at the manger one would slay an ox.

“So died I by a miserable death:

“My other friends were pitilessly slain

“Around me, as though white-tusked swine they were

“At some rich monarch’s board, or marriage rites,

“Or social meal, or at a dainty feast. 415

“Thou hast stood by when many men where slain

“In single combat, or in dreadful fight;

“Yet more thou wouldst have grieved if thou hadst
seen

“How in the house round bowls and tables full

“We lay, and all the pavement smoked with blood.

“Cassandra’s, Priam’s daughter, piteous voice, 420

“Whom o’er me crafty Clytemnestra slew,

“I heard; but on the ground I raised my hands,

“And dying, clutched my sword. She, shameless one,

“Stood off, nor deigned, though I to Hades went, 425

“To draw my eyelids down or close my mouth.

“Oh! there is nought more fierce or impudent,

“When in her mind such deeds she meditates,

“Than is a woman who, like her, has planned

“The dreadful deed, her wedded spouse to slay. 430

“ Full surely thought I that I should return,
 “ To children and to servants welcome, home.
 “ She above all, by her atrocious plots,
 “ Has heaped disgrace upon herself, and all
 “ Women hereafter, e’en though one be good.”

‘ He spake ; and I addressed him in reply :

435

“ O strange it is, how the wide-seeing Jove
 “ Has violently hated Atreus’ race,
 “ Through female counsels, from the very first !
 “ For Helen many of us died ; ’gainst thee
 “ Far off has Clytemnestra planned her wiles.”

‘ So spake I : he forthwith replied and said :

440

“ Then never be thou gentle to thy wife,
 “ Nor ev’ry word thou know’st thyself disclose :
 “ Tell her but part, and let part be concealed.

“ But not to thee, Ulysses ! from thy wife
 “ Will slaughter come, for she is very wise,
 “ And in her mind she prudent counsels knows,

445

“ Icarius’ daughter, sage Penelope.

“ Her, newly married, going to the war

“ We left ; an infant boy was at her breast :

“ Now sits he prosp’rous, numbered among men.

“ Him his dear father when he comes will see,

450

“ And he embrace his father, as is right.

“ But my wife did not e’en permit mine eyes

“ To gaze upon my son, but slew me first.

“ [Another thing I tell thee ; weigh it well ;

“ To thy dear land steer secretly thy ship,

455

“ Not openly ; (in women is no trust.)

“ But come now tell me this and tell me true,

“ Of my son living in Orchomenos,

“ In sandy Pylos, or in Sparta wide 460

“ With Menelaus, hear ye any news?

“ Still upon earth Orestes is not dead.”

‘ So spake he : I addressed him in reply :

“ Why ask, Atrides ? I nor know if he

“ Lives or is dead : ’tis wrong vain words to speak.”

‘ Thus interchanging mournful words we stood 465

‘ In grief and letting fall the frequent tear.

‘ The soul of Peleus’ son, Achilles, came ;

‘ Those of Patroclus, brave Antilochus,

‘ And Ajax, who was best in face and form

‘ Of all the Greeks, next Peleus’ noble son. 470

‘ The soul then of the swift Æacides

‘ Knew me, and grieving spake these winged words :

“ Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !

“ Why, bold one ! plann’st thou yet a greater deed ?

“ Dar’st thou to come to Pluto’s house, where dwell

“ Th’ insensate dead, shades of departed men ?” 475

‘ He spake : and I addressed him in reply :

“ Achilles ! son of Peleus ! of the Greeks

“ Bravest ! I come with purpose to consult

“ Tiresias, if he can counsel tell

“ How I to rocky Ithaca may go. 480

“ For not yet have I Greece approached, nor yet

“ Been on mine own land, but have always woes.

“ Than thou, Achilles ! none more fortunate,

“ Either of former or of after men.

“ Before, while living, equally with Gods

“ We Grecians honoured thee ; among the dead 485

“ Thou rulest now ; though dead do not repine.”

‘ I spake : and he forthwith replied and said :

- “ Noble Ulysses ! make not light of death ;
“ I’d rather be a serf, another’s slave,
“ And be a landless man, of substance small 490
“ Than be the king of all departed dead,
“ But tell me tidings of my noble son,
“ If as a chief he followed to the war :
“ Tell me if aught of Peleus thou hast heard :
“ Holds he his state yet, ’mid the Myrmidons ? 495
“ In Hellas, Phthia, do they him despise,
“ Because old age afflicts his hands and feet ?
“ In the sun’s rays I was not there to aid,
“ Such as I once was when, in spacious Troy
“ The Greeks protecting, I the chief men slew. 500
“ If for one moment to my father’s house
“ I such had gone I would have made them rue,
“ Each one his prowess and his unchecked hands,
“ Who violently keep him from his state.”
“ He spake, but I addressed him in reply :
“ Of noble Peleus I have nothing heard ; 505
“ But of thy dear son, Neoptolemus,
“ I, as thou bidd’st, will tell thee all the truth.
“ I in a hollow equal ship, myself
“ Brought him from Scyros to the well-greaved Greeks.
“ When we took counsel round the city, Troy, 510
“ He ever spoke the first, nor erred in words ;
“ Nestor divine and I alone excelled.
“ When on the Trojans’ plain with sword we fought,
“ Not in the crowd of men he stayed, but rushed,
“ Yielding to none in valour, to the front, 515
“ And slaughtered many in the dreadful fight.
“ I could not all of them recite or name,

- “What men he slew when fighting for the Greeks :
 “So with the sword the son of Telephus,
 “Eurypylus, he slew (and many friends 520
 “From Ceto round him, for a woman’s gifts),
 “Memnon except, the fairest man I’ve seen.
 “When to the horse at which Epēus toiled
 “We bravest Argives went, to me was all
 “In charge, [the door to open and to close,] 525
 “The other chiefs and leaders of the Greeks
 “Wiped tears away, and trembled in their limbs :
 “But him I never with my eyes beheld
 “Paling his fair complexion, nor a tear
 “From his cheeks wiping ; but he prayed me much
 “To quit the horse : he grasped his sword and spear, 530
 “And planned destruction to the men of Troy.
 “When Priam’s lofty city we destroyed,
 “Back to the ships with share of prey he went
 “Unscathed, not stricken by a brazen spear, 535
 “Nor in close combat, as oft haps in war
 “When Mars embroils the medley of the fight.”
 ‘I spake : the soul of swift Æacides
 ‘Strode grandly o’er the lilied lawn, in joy,
 ‘At what I told him of his valiant son. 540
 ‘The other souls of the departed dead
 ‘Stood sad, and asked me of their relatives.
 ‘The soul of Ajax, son of Telamon,
 ‘Stood off apart, enraged that I had gained
 ‘A conquest o’er him, when we had a suit 545
 ‘About Achilles’ armour at the ships ;
 ‘His venerable mother offered it,
 ‘Minerva and the sons of Troy adjudged.

‘ Would that I had not conquered in such strife,
‘ For therefore earth detained a man like him,
‘ Ajax, who far excelled in form and deeds 550
‘ The other Greeks, next Peleus’ noble son.
‘ And him I thus with honeyed words addressed :
‘ “ O Ajax ! son of noble Telamon !
‘ “ Wert thou not ready to forget thy wrath,
‘ “ Even when dead, for those accursed arms 555
‘ “ Which to the Greeks the Gods have made a bane ?
‘ “ Thou, such a tower to them, wert destroyed ;
‘ “ For thee we Greeks were in excessive grief,
‘ “ As were we for Achilles, Peleus’ son,
‘ “ When dead ; but no one else was blamable
‘ “ But Jove, who bore excessive enmity 560
‘ “ To the Greek army, and brought fate on thee.
‘ “ But hither come, O king ! to hear my words ;
‘ “ Subdue thine anger and thy noble soul.”

‘ I spake ; but he made no reply, and went
‘ After the other souls to Erebus.
‘ He might have spoken, though enraged, to me, 565
‘ Or I to him, but in my breast my mind
‘ The souls of other dead desired to see.
‘ There I saw Minos, Jove’s illustrious son,
‘ Holding a golden sceptre, to the dead
‘ Dispensing justice as he sate, and they,
‘ Sitting and standing round the king, required 570
‘ His judgments in wide-gated Pluto’s house.
‘ Orion next of giant size I saw,
‘ Driving the wild beasts on the liliated mead,
‘ Which in the solitary hills he slew,
‘ Holding a brazen strong club in his hands. 575

- ‘ And I saw Tityos, the son of Earth ;
‘ Stretched on the plain he o’er nine acres lay :
‘ Upon each side of him two vultures sate,
‘ Who tore his heart and on his vitals preyed.
‘ He with his hands could not repel them ; he
‘ Had to Latona, concubine of Jove, 580
‘ As through the lovely plains of Panopeus
‘ She went to Pytho, offered violence.
‘ Then I saw Tantalus, afflicted much,
‘ In water standing which approached his chin ;
‘ He thirsting eager stood but could not drink.
‘ Oft as the old man longed to drink and stooped, 585
‘ So oft the water would retire (black earth
‘ Shewed at his feet) for the God dried it up.
‘ And leafy trees poured fruit from o’er his head,
‘ Pears and pomegranates and the apple-trees
‘ With shining fruit, sweet figs and olives green. 590
‘ When them the old man stretched his hands to grasp,
‘ To the dark clouds the winds would bear them off.
‘ Then I saw Sisyphus, afflicted much,
‘ Who heaved a huge stone up with hands and feet,
‘ And straining urged it to the mountain’s crest : 595
‘ When it was just about to reach the top
‘ With overpow’ring force it turned again,
‘ And rolled impetuous to the plain below.
‘ Painfully back he thrust it ; from his limbs
‘ Sweat flowed, and from his head a dust arose. 600
‘ Then I perceived the noble Hercules,
‘ A phantom only ; he among the Gods
‘ Is feasting and has Hebe for his wife,
‘ [Of Jove and golden-sandalled Juno child.]

‘ Shrieks of the dead were round him, as of birds, 605
‘ On all sides cowering ; he, like gloomy night,
‘ Holding a naked bow with arrow fixed
‘ Upon the string, was peering awfully,
‘ And seeming ever in the act to shoot.
‘ Terrific was the ceinture round his breast ;
‘ A belt of gold, where works divine were wrought ; 610
‘ Bears, and wild boars, and lions with bright eyes,
‘ Fights, battles, murders, slaughterings of men.
‘ He who devised it never should devise
‘ Another, he who planned that belt by art.
‘ He knew me, when he saw me with his eyes, 615
‘ And weeping spoke to me these winged words :
‘ “ Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !
‘ “ Wretched ! dost thou drag on that woeful fate
‘ “ Which when beneath the sun’s rays I have dragged ?
‘ “ Of Jove, the son of Saturn, I was son, 620
‘ “ And yet had woes unnumbered ; to a man
‘ “ Far my inferior I was assigned
‘ “ As servant ; on me labours hard he laid,
‘ “ And sent me hither to bring off the dog,
‘ “ Nor thought of other task more hard than this.
‘ “ I seized and bore him off from Pluto’s house ; 625
‘ “ Hermes and blue-eyed Pallas aided me.”
‘ Thus speaking Pluto’s house he went within ;
‘ But I stood firm, to see if any one
‘ Of heroes who had died before would come.
‘ And I should men of former days have seen, 630
‘ Whom e’er I willed, Theseus, Pirithous,
‘ Jove’s noble sons ; but of the dead had come
‘ Unnumbered nations with an awful noise,

‘ And pale fear seized me lest the Gorgon’s head,
‘ That dreadful monster, noble Proserpine 635
‘ Should send from Hades : to the ship I went
‘ Forthwith, and bade my friends to go on board
‘ And loose the mooring ropes with speed ; they went
‘ On board the ship, and on the benches sate :
‘ The current bore them down the ocean’s stream ;
‘ The oars at first, then a propitious breeze ! 640

BOOK XII.

‘ But when the ship had left the ocean’s stream
‘ And reached the surges of the wide-wayed sea,
‘ And the Ææan island, where the homes
‘ And dancing-places of the new-born dawn
‘ Are placed, and where ’s the rising of the sun,
‘ Arrived, we drew our ship up on the sand, 5
‘ And disembarked upon the shore ourselves ;
‘ And slumb’ring there we waited for the dawn.
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
‘ I sent my friends before to Circe’s house)
‘ To bring the body of Elpenor dead. 10
‘ Cutting the logs where highest rose the shore,
‘ We buried him with grief and frequent tears ;
‘ But when his body and his arms were burned,
‘ We piled a mound, a column drew, and fixed
‘ An oar upon the summit of the mound. 15

- ‘ All we arranged in order, nor did we,
‘ From Hades coming, Circe’s eyes escape.
‘ She preparation made ; her maids with her
‘ Brought quickly bread, much flesh, and bright red
 wine ;
‘ And standing in the midst the Goddess spoke : 20
‘ “ Bold men ! who living went to Pluto’s house,
‘ “ Twice dying, while all other men die once !
‘ “ But come ye, eat the food and drink the wine,
‘ “ Staying all day ; and with appearing dawn
‘ “ Ye shall set sail and I will show the way, 25
‘ “ And tell ye all, that not from evil plans
‘ “ By sea or land ye may encounter woes.”
 ‘ So spake she, and our noble mind obeyed.
‘ All day we feasted, till the set of sun,
‘ On flesh abundant and delicious wine. 30
‘ But when the sun went down and darkness came,
‘ They slept beside the cables of the ship.
‘ Me by the hand she took, and made me sit
‘ From my dear friends apart, and questioned me,
‘ While in due order I recounted all. 35
‘ Then venerable Circe to me said :
‘ “ All is not finished yet ; hear what I say,
‘ “ Which God himself will to thy mind recall.
‘ “ First to the Sirens thou must go, who all
‘ “ Mankind bewitch, whoever to them goes.
‘ “ Whoe’er unwittingly draws near and hears
‘ “ The Sirens’ voice, by him nor wife nor babes
‘ “ Will stand, when home returning, and rejoice.
‘ “ The Sirens sitting in a mead bewitch
‘ “ Him with sweet strains ; near is a pile of bones
- 

“ Of withered men, and round them shrinks the flesh. 45
“ But row thou past them, and stop up the ears
“ Of thy companions, melting honeyed wax,
“ Lest they should hear ; but if thyself wouldst hear
“ Let thy companions bind thee, hands and feet, 50
“ In the swift ship, upreared against the mast,
“ And from it let the cords be tied that so
“ The Sirens’ voice delighted thou mayst hear.
“ And if thou pray’st thy friends to set thee free,
“ Then let them bind thee with more fast’nings still.
“ But when thy friends have past the Sirens rowed, 55
“ I will not any more at length explain
“ Which shall thy journey be ; but thou thyself
“ Deliberate, and I will speak of both.
“ On one side there are beetling rocks ; on them
“ The wave of blue-eyed Amphitritè roars. 60
“ The blessed Gods call them the Wanderers.
“ By that way not e’en birds can pass ; not doves
“ Which the ambrosia bear to father Jove.
“ As the smooth rock takes one of them away,
“ Jove with another makes the number full. 65
“ No ship of men that comes there e’er escapes ;
“ But the sea’s waves and blasts of deadly fire*
“ Bear off ships’ planks and bodies of the men.
“ Past this but one sea-going ship has sailed,
“ Argo world-famed, that from Æëtes came ; 70
“ And her against the rocks the waves had struck
“ If Juno, who loved Jason, had not helped.
“ There are two rocks, one reaches to the sky
“ With pointed peak which a blue cloud surrounds,

* Volcanic fire.

- “ Nor ever ebbs away ; nor does bright air 75
“ In summer or in autumn touch its top ;
“ Nor could a mortal climb it or o’er pass,
“ If he had even twenty hands and feet.
“ Smooth is the rock as though it polished were,
“ And in the midst there is a murky cave, 80
“ Turned to the gloomy Erebus ; past this,
“ Noble Ulysses ! ye may guide the ship.
“ Not from the hollow ship a youthful man
“ Could with a bow-shot reach the cave’s recess.
“ Therein dwells Scylla, shrieking horribly ; 85
“ [Her voice is like that of a new-born whelp]
“ An evil monster ; no one would rejoice
“ To see her, though it were a God that saw.
“ She has twelve feet, mis-shapen tentacles ;
“ Six necks of length enormous ; and on each 90
“ A dreadful head, and in it three-rowed teeth,
“ Many and close set, full of gloomy death.
“ Half of her in the hollow cave is sunk ;
“ She rears her heads from out the horrid gulf,
“ And hunts for fishes, peering round the rock, 95
“ Dolphins and dog-fish, or a whale may catch,
“ Which roaring Amphitrite num’rous feeds.
“ Past her no sailors with their ship e’er boast
“ Unharm’d to fly ; she seizes with each head
“ A man, and bears them from the dark prow’d ship. 100
“ The other rock, but lower on the ground,
“ Ulysses ! thou wilt see ; the two are near
“ Each other, and thou couldst an arrow shoot.
“ A great wild fig-tree, flourishing with leaves,
“ Is on it ; dire Charybdis there sucks in 105

“ Black water ; thrice a day she throws it up
 “ Thrice sucks it in ; O dreadful ! mayst thou not
 “ Hap to be there when thus she sucks it in !
 “ Not Neptune’s self could save thee from the woe.
 “ But keep near Scylla’s rock, and past it row
 “ Thy ship with speed ; ’tis better thou shouldst lose¹¹⁰
 “ Six of thy friends than lose them all at once.”

‘ She spake, and I addressed her in reply :

“ Come, Goddess ! tell me truly, if I can
 “ Deadly Charybdis flee from, and repulse
 “ The other when she carries off my friends.”

‘ I spake : the Goddess then replied and said : ¹¹⁵

“ Audacious man ! are warlike deeds and toils
 “ Thy care, nor yield’st thou to th’ immortal Gods ?
 “ No mortal she, but an immortal woe,
 “ Dread, grievous, savage and invincible :
 “ No fight with her ; to flee from her is best. ¹²⁰
 “ If thou couldst arm thyself beside the rock
 “ She would, I fear, rush on thee and bear off
 “ With her so many heads as many men.

“ But row thou strongly on, and with loud voice
 “ Upon Cratöis, Scylla’s mother, call,
 “ Who bore her a calamity to men ; ¹²⁵

“ She will restrain her from another swoop.
 “ To the Trinacrian island thou wilt come,
 “ Where many cows and fat sheep of the sun
 “ Are feeding ; seven herds of cows, of sheep
 “ As many fair flocks ; fifty are in each : ¹³⁰

“ They breed not nor diminish ; Goddesses
 “ Their shepherdesses are, the fair-haired nymphs
 “ Called Phaethusa and Lampetia,

- “ Whom to the Sun divine Neæra bore.
“ When them their venerable mother bore
“ And nurtured, she removed them far to dwell
“ In the Trinacrian island, and to tend 135
“ Their father’s sheep and trailing-footed cows.
“ If these, consulting thy return, thou leav’st
“ Unharm’d, ye yet to Ithaca may go,
“ Though suff’ring woes ; but if thou harmest them
“ Destruction I predict to ship and crew : 140
“ If thou escape thyself, thou wilt return
“ Late, miserably losing all thy friends.”
“ She spake and golden-throned Aurora came :
“ The Goddess then across the island went,
“ I to the ship, and my companions urged
“ To go on board and loose the mooring-ropes. 145
“ They quick embarking on the benches sate,
“ [And beat the sea in order with their oars].
“ To us behind the ship with azure prow
“ A favourable breeze, that filled the sails,
“ A good companion, fair-haired Circe sent,
“ A dreadful Goddess with a human voice. 150
“ We ranged with care the tackling in the ship
“ And sate ; the wind and steersman drove it straight.
“ Then to my friends with grieving heart I said :
“ “ My friends ! ’tis fit not one nor two alone
“ “ Should know the prophecies which Circe spake : 155
“ “ I’ll tell them, that or knowing we may die,
“ “ Or cautiously may death and fate escape.
“ “ She first of all commands us to beware
“ “ Of the divinely-sounding Sirens’ voice
“ “ And flow’ry meadow ; me alone she bids

‘ “ To hear their voice ; but bind ye me with cords 160

‘ “ Made tight, that firmly I may there remain,

‘ “ Against the mast ; thence let the cords be tied.

‘ “ If even I entreat you and command

‘ “ To set me free, then with more fast’nings bind.”

‘ Thus to my friends I ev’rything explained : 165

‘ Meanwhile the well-wrought ship with speed approached

‘ The Sirens’ isle, for a fair breeze impelled.

‘ Then ceased the wind and there was breathless calm ;

‘ The Deity had lulled the waves to sleep.

‘ My friends uprising furled the vessel’s sails, 170

‘ Placed them within the ship, and sate to row,

‘ Making the sea white with their polished oars.

‘ I with sharp sword cut up a lump of wax

‘ In pieces small, and pressed them with firm hands :

‘ The wax soon melted, for the force and ray 175

‘ Of royal Sun, sprung from Hyperion,

‘ Compelled ; my friends’ ears I in order stopped.

‘ They bound me upright, both my hands and feet,

‘ Against the mast from which they tied the cords,

‘ And sitting beat the white sea with their oars. 180

‘ When I was distant far as one could shout,

‘ In rapid course the swiftly-sailing ship,

‘ As it rushed near, was not from them concealed ;

‘ And they made ready an harmonious song :*

* The Sirens’ song is also here given in rhyming hendecasyllabic metre :

‘ Come hither, Ulysses ! thou man of renown !

‘ Thou boast of the Grecians ! thy vessel bring down

‘ To hear what we sing ; none go sailing along

‘ Who do not attend to our honey-sweet song,

- “ Far-famed Ulysses ! glory of the Greeks !
“ Come stay thy ship and listen to our song. 185
“ No one e’er passes this way in a ship
“ But from our throats our honeyed voice he hears :
“ Delighted and much wiser home he goes.
“ How Greeks and Trojans by the Gods’ decree
“ In Troy have laboured, all, we know it all, 190
“ Know all that happens on the fertile earth.”
‘ Thus sang they, uttering a lovely strain,
‘ And my heart longed to listen ; with my brows
‘ I signed, and bade my comrades set me free :
‘ They leaning to their oars rowed on, while quick
‘ Rose Perimēdes and Eurylochus, 195
‘ And with more ropes they bound me and restrained.
‘ When we had by them sailed, nor more could hear
‘ Either the Sirens’ voices or their song,
‘ My dear companions from their ears withdrew
‘ The wax I fixed, and loosed me from my bonds. 200
‘ When we had left the island we descried
‘ Smoke and a mighty wave, and heard a sound.
‘ Down from their hands in terror fell the oars,
‘ And sounded in the flood ; the ship stood still,
‘ For they the tap’ring oars no longer plied. 205
‘ But through the ship I went and urged my friends,
‘ Addressing each of them with honeyed words :
“ O friends ! we are not ignorant of woes :
“ This is not greater than when Cyclops once

‘ And home they return both with wisdom and joy :
‘ How the Greeks and the Trojans have laboured at Troy,
‘ By the Gods’ instigation, we know it all well,
‘ And all that may happen on earth we can tell.’

“With force enclosed us in a hollow cave : 210
“Thence by my valour and my prudent mind
“We fled, and this we shall remember yet.
“Now come, and as I bid let all obey :
“Upon the benches sitting with your oars
“Beat the deep troubled water, if but Jove 215
“Grant us to flee from this destruction too.
“And, steersman ! thus I charge thee, weigh it well,
“For thou dost guide the rudder of the ship ;
“Keep it outside those breakers and that smoke,
“And hug the rocks, lest thither unperceived 220
“It drift and so thou bringest us to grief.”

‘I spake, and quickly they obeyed my words.
‘Of Scylla, that impracticable ill,
‘I spoke not, lest my friends in fear should cease
‘From rowing, and should crowd themselves within.
‘Then Circe’s mortifying order I 225
‘Neglected wilfully, for she forbade
‘That I should arm myself ; but putting on
‘My sounding armour, handling two long spears,
‘I mounted on the fore-deck of the ship.
‘There, till the rocky Scylla should appear 230
‘Who brought destruction to my friends, I stayed,
‘But nowhere could I see her, and my eyes
‘Were tired with gazing at the gloomy rock.
‘We dismally sailed up the water-gorge,
‘Scylla on this, Charybdis on that side, 235
‘Dreadfully sucking in the sea’s salt wave.
‘And when again she threw the water forth,
‘As boils a cauldron on a mighty fire,
‘She bellowed in the whirlpool, and the foam

‘ Fell from on high on both the topmost rocks.
‘ But when the sea’s salt water she sucked in, 240
‘ All in a whirl within she seemed, and round
‘ The rock roared horribly ; and underneath
‘ Earth showed dark sand, and pale fear on them seized :
‘ To her, afraid of death, we turned our eyes.
‘ Scylla the meanwhile from the ship dragged forth²⁴⁵
‘ Six of my friends, in hands and strength the best.
‘ When I looked in-board to my friends, I saw
‘ Their hands and feet as they were raised on high.
‘ Loudly they called upon me and pronounced,
‘ For the last time, my name with grieving heart. 250
‘ As when upon a rock a fisherman
‘ Throws with a long rod to the little fish
‘ His crafty baits, and plunges in the sea
‘ A hook, the horn of a field-pastured ox,
‘ Seizes a fish and drags it quiv’ring forth,
‘ So they were lifted quiv’ring to the rocks ; 255
‘ And there within she ate them, screaming loud,
‘ Stretching their hands to me in struggle dire.
‘ That was the sight most pitiful of all
‘ Which o’er the sea’s gulf wand’ring I have seen.
‘ When we escaped the rocks, Charybdis dire 260
‘ And Scylla, to the Sun’s famed isle we came.
‘ There were the beauteous cows with foreheads broad,
‘ And many fat sheep of Hyperion Sun.
‘ Still in the black ship out at sea I heard
‘ The lowing of the cows within their stalls, 265
‘ And bleating of the sheep ; upon my mind
‘ The warning of the sightless soothsayer,
‘ Theban Tiresias, and Circe fell,

‘ Who gave me many orders to avoid
‘ The island of the men-delighting Sun.
‘ Then to my friends with grieving hearts I said : 270
‘ “ Hear ye my words, my woe-enduring friends !
‘ “ That of Tiresias the prophecies,
‘ “ And of Ææan Circe I may tell,
‘ “ Who gave me many orders to avoid
‘ “ The island of the men-delighting Sun ;
‘ “ For there they said the direst woe would be ; 275
‘ “ But past the island the black ship compel.”
‘ So spake I, and their very heart was crushed,
‘ And fiercely thus Eurylochus replied :
‘ “ Ulysses ! hard thou art, pre-eminent
‘ “ In mind ; thy limbs are all of iron made, 280
‘ “ Who suff’rest not thy friends, though overwhelmed
‘ “ With toil and sleep, upon the land to go,
‘ “ Where in the sea-girt isle we might prepare
‘ “ A dainty feast, but bid’st us still to roam,
‘ “ Through night that comes on swiftly, wandering
‘ “ Far from the island in the gloomy sea. 285
‘ “ The winds, of ships the bane, by night are strong ;
‘ “ How could one sad destruction e’er escape,
‘ “ If on a sudden came a storm of wind,
‘ “ Notus or Zephyr, with unfav’ring blast,
‘ “ Which spite of kingly Gods destroy a ship ? 290
‘ “ But let us rather now obey black night,
‘ “ Prepare a feast and by the swift ship stay,
‘ “ And in the morn embarking put to sea.”
‘ So spake Eurylochus ; the rest approved ;
‘ And then I knew that God was planning ills, 295
‘ And I addressed him with these winged word

‘ “ Eurylochus ! ye force me to comply,
‘ “ Me thus alone ; but come and swear to me
‘ “ A mighty oath that, if we find a herd
‘ “ Of cows or flock of sheep, not one of you
‘ “ Will rashly either cow or sheep destroy, 300
‘ “ But eat in peace the food which Circe gave.”

‘ I spoke, and as I bade they took the oath :
‘ When they had sworn and made the oath complete,
‘ We in a hollow harbour stayed the ship, 305
‘ Near to fresh water : from the ship my friends
‘ Went forth, and skilfully prepared a feast.
‘ But when for drink and food their appetite
‘ They satisfied, they weeping called to mind
‘ Their friends, whom Scylla taking from the ship 310
‘ Devoured, and sleep came on them as they wept.
‘ When ’twas the night’s third watch, and now the stars
‘ Had changed their courses, cloud-compelling Jove
‘ In a strong tempest urged a blust’ring wind,
‘ Cov’ring at once the earth and sea with clouds,
‘ And from the sky the night came rushing down. 315
‘ When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
‘ We beached and dragged the ship within a cave :
‘ There the nymphs’ dancing-places were and homes.
‘ Then I assembled and addressed them all :
‘ “ My friends ! within the ship are food and drink ; 320
‘ “ Lest ill we suffer keep we from the cows,
‘ “ For to a dread God cows and sheep belong,
‘ “ The Sun, who all things overlooks and hears.”
‘ So spake I, and their noble mind agreed.
‘ A whole month Notus ceaseless blew ; except 325
‘ Eurys and Notus blew no other wind.

‘ As long as they had food and wine, so long
‘ They from the cows, though eager still for food,
‘ Abstained ; but when all ship’s provisions failed
‘ Perforce they wandered, trying to get food, 330
‘ Fish, birds, whatever to their hands might come,
‘ With crooked hooks : their stomachs hunger vexed.
‘ I up the island went apart to pray
‘ The Gods, if one would point out my return.
‘ When through the island going and my friends 335
‘ Avoiding, where was shelter from the wind,
‘ Washing my hands, I prayed to all the Gods
‘ Who in Olympus dwell ; they poured sweet sleep
‘ Upon my eyes. Meanwhile Eurylochus
‘ Began an evil counsel to my friends : 340
‘ “ Companions ! though afflicted, hear my words :
‘ “ All deaths are sad to miserable men ;
‘ “ To die by hunger saddest of them all.
‘ “ Come let us drive the best cows of the Sun,
‘ “ And to the Gods who in the wide sky dwell
‘ “ Do sacrifice. If e’er to Ithaca, 345
‘ “ Our native land, we go, we will erect
‘ “ To the Hyperion Sun a temple rich,
‘ “ And off’rings good and many place therein.
‘ “ If for the straight-horned cows enraged, he will
‘ “ Destroy the ship, and other Gods assent,
‘ “ I’d rather swallow once the wave and die, 350
‘ “ Than in a desert isle be squeezed in drops.”
‘ So spake Eurylochus ; my other friends
‘ Agreed, and drove the best cows of the Sun
‘ From near, for from the dark-prowed ship the cows
‘ Not far were feeding, fair with foreheads broad. 355

- ‘ They stood around and made pray’rs to the God,
‘ Plucking the soft leaves of a high-branched oak,
‘ For they no barley had within the ship.
‘ When they had made the pray’rs and slain and
 flayed,
‘ They cut the thighs off, covered them with fat 360
‘ In double folds, and placed raw meat thereon.
‘ Upon the burning sacrifice no wine
‘ Had they to pour ; but they with water made
‘ Libation, and the entrails roasted all.
‘ But when the thighs were burned, the inward parts
‘ They tasted, cut the rest, and fixed on spits. 365
‘ Then from my eyelids sweet sleep rushed away,
‘ And to the swift ship and sea-shore I went.
‘ While I was going and approached the ship,
‘ The sav’ry smell of roast meat round me came,
‘ And to th’ immortal Gods I groaning cried : 370
‘ “ O father Jove ! and ye immortal Gods !
‘ “ In cruel sleep ye’ve lulled me to my woe.
‘ “ My friends remaining have a great deed planned.”
 ‘ Quick to the Sun the nymph Lampetia ·
‘ Went with the news that we had slain the cows. 375
‘ With angry heart th’ immortals he addressed :
‘ “ O father Jove ! and ye immortal Gods !
‘ “ Do of Ulysses, Laërtiades,
‘ “ Punish the friends ; for they with violence
‘ “ Have killed the cows, in which I took delight
‘ “ As I was going to the starry sky 380
‘ “ And when I turned back from the sky to earth.
‘ “ Unless due penalty they pay, I’ll go
‘ “ To Hades, and will shine among the dead.”

- ‘ The cloud-compelling Jove replied and said :
‘ “ Sun ! shine thou still among th’ immortal Gods, 385
‘ “ And mortal men upon the fertile earth :
‘ “ Soon their swift ship with shining thunderbolt
‘ “ I’ll strike and shiver in the gloomy sea.”
‘ [This from fair-haired Calypso I had heard ;
‘ Herself, she said, heard it from Mercury.] 390
‘ But when I to the ship and sea had come
‘ They each on each threw earnestly the blame,
‘ Nor could we find escape ; the cows were dead.
‘ Forthwith to them the Gods showed prodigies ;
‘ Hides crawled about ; flesh bellowed on the spits, 395
‘ Both roast and raw ; the roar was that of cows.
‘ Six days my friends were feasting since they drove
‘ The Sun’s fair cows ; but when Jove, Saturn’s son,
‘ Had sent the seventh day, the hurricane
‘ Had ceased, and we, embarking, put to sea, 400
‘ Rearing the mast and stretching canvas white.
‘ When we had left the island, and appeared
‘ No other land, but only sky and sea,
‘ The son of Saturn placed an azure cloud 405
‘ Above the hollow ship ; the sea grew dark
‘ Beneath it, and the ship made little way ;
‘ For Zephyr, raging with a mighty storm,
‘ Came quick ; the wind’s force both the fore-stays
 broke ;
‘ The mast fell back ; the tackling in the hold 410
‘ All lay confusedly ; upon the stern
‘ It struck the steersman’s head, and all at once
‘ Fractured the skull ; he like a diver fell
‘ From off the deck, and the life left his bones.

- ‘Jove at the same time thund’ring struck the ship 415
‘With light’ning; when with light’ning struck, it
reeled,
‘Filled with sulphureous vapour; from the ship
‘My friends fell off, and floated on the waves
‘Like gulls; the Gods prevented their return.
‘I through the ship went pacing till the wave 420
‘Broke from the keel the sides, and bore it off
‘All bare, and snapped the mast off at the keel.
‘But to the mast a back-stay had been fixed,
‘Made of the hides of oxen; and with this
‘I lashed the two together, keel and mast, 425
‘And sitting on them was by fierce winds blown.
‘Then Zephyr ceased with hurricane to blow,
‘And Notus quickly came and caused me grief;
‘For I to dread Charybdis must return.
‘Drifting all night I with the rising sun 430
‘To Scylla and the dread Charybdis came.
‘The sea’s salt water she was sucking in;
‘But to the tall wild fig-tree reaching high
‘I, like a bat, clung on, but had not place
‘Either to fix my feet firm or to step. 435
‘The roots were distant, far the boughs removed,
‘High, large, Charybdis over-shadowing.
‘Firmly I held till she threw back again
‘The mast and keel, which came at last to me
‘Eagerly waiting. What time one gets up 440
‘To supper from the forum, many suits
‘Of youthful litigants determining,
‘So long the beams were ere they re-appeared
‘From out Charybdis: I my hands and feet

‘ Let down, and midway on the long beams plunged
‘ Beside me, and sate rowing with my hands.
‘ [Scylla Jove suffered not to see me, else 445
‘ I should not have escaped from dreadful death].
‘ Nine days I drifted ; to th’ Ogygian isle
‘ On the tenth night the Gods impelled me ; there
‘ Fair-haired Calypso dwells, a Goddess dread
‘ With human voice, who kindly treated me.
‘ But why my tale prolong ? for yesterday 450
‘ I told it to thee and thy noble wife
‘ Within thine house ; I hate to tell again
‘ What I have carefully before detailed.]

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIII.

HE spake ; they all in perfect silence sate,
And were spell-bound within the shady halls.
To him Alcinous replied and said :
‘ Ulysses ! since thou to my house, with floor
‘ Of brass and lofty roof adorned, hast come,
‘ I think thou wilt not a mere wand’rer go 5
‘ On thy return, though much thou hast endured.
‘ This urgently I say to each of you
‘ Who in my halls bright wine of honour quaff
‘ Continually, and listen to the bard :
‘ Vests for the stranger in a polished chest 10
‘ Are laid, and much-wrought gold, and other gifts
‘ Which the Phæacian counsellors have brought :
‘ Come, let each man of us a tripod large
‘ And cauldron give him ; we will give them back
‘ In an assembly ; for ’twere hard that one
‘ A largess by himself alone should give.’ 15

So spake Alcinous : his words pleased well,
And to their home went each of them to sleep.
When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,

They hasted to the ship, and with them bore
 Man-aiding-brass : the sacred majesty
 Of king Alcinous, who went himself 20
 On board, beneath the benches ranged them well,
 Lest they obstruct the crew when quick they rowed.
 They, going to Alcinous' abode,
 Prepared a feast. The sacred majesty *Test*
 Of king Alcinous had sacrificed
 An ox to cloud-compelling Jove, the son 25
 Of Saturn, who is ruler over all.
 Burning the thighs, upon the noble feast
 They fed delighted ; and Demodocus,
 The bard divine, by all men honoured, sang.
 Oft to the sun Ulysses turned his head,
 Longing for sun-set, eager to return. 30
 As for his supper pines a man, for whom
 Two black steers all day through a fallow ground
 Have dragged a solid plough, and welcome sets
 The sun's light that to supper he may go,
 And his knees pain him as he goes along ;
 So to Ulysses welcome set the sun. 35
 He quickly the Phæacians, fond of oars,
 And specially Alcinous, addressed :
 ' O king Alcinous ! the people's chief !
 ' When ye have made libation, on my way
 ' Send me unharmed, and ye ! O fare ye well !
 ' All that my mind desires is now complete, 40
 ' Convoy and friendly gifts, which may the Gods
 ' Make prosp'rous ! may I find on my return
 ' My blameless wife at home with friends unharmed !
 ' May ye delight your virgin-wedded wives

‘And children, here remaining! may the Gods 45
 ‘Grant ev’ry good, nor ill befall the state!’

He spoke: they all approved and gave command
 To send the stranger, for he well had said.

Alcinous the herald then addressed:

‘Mix in the bowl, Pontonous! the wine, 50
 ‘And pour it out for all within the house,
 ‘That, having offered prayer to father Jove,
 ‘We to his native land the guest may send.’

He spake: Pontonous the sweet wine mixed,
 And gave to all successively: they made
 To the blest Gods, who in the wide sky dwell, 55
 Libation, rising from their seats: then rose
 Divine Ulysses, and the double cup
 Placed in Arête’s hands, and her addressed:
 ‘Farewell, O queen! farewell unceasingly
 ‘Till age and death, the lot of all, arrive! 60
 ‘I am returning; mayst thou here delight
 ‘In children, people, king Alcinous!’

Ulysses spoke and o’er the threshold went.
 Alcinous a herald with him sent
 To lead him to the swift ship and the shore. 65
 Arête sent with him her female slaves,
 One with a well-washed tunic and a cloak;
 Another sent a heavy trunk to bear;
 And food and ruddy wine another brought.
 These, when they to the ship and sea had come, 70
 The noble crew received, and quick bestowed
 Within the ship, and all the drink and food.
 Then for Ulysses on the deck they spread
 A rug and linen, that upon the deck

He undisturbed might sleep : he went on board 75
And silent lay ; they on the benches sate
In order ; from the pierced stone loosed the rope,
And, leaning, with the oar-blade beat the sea,
While soft upon his eye-lids slumber fell,
Unwaking, sweetest, most resembling death. 80
The ship, as four-yoked horses o'er the plain,
All urged together by the scourge's blows,
Up-stepping high with ease their journey make,
So rose her prow aloft ; there rushed behind
A wave, great, purple, of the swelling sea. 85
Safe, steadily she ran ; nor falcon-hawk,
Of birds the swiftest, could have followed close.
Thus swiftly running she the sea-waves cut,
Bearing a man with counsels like the Gods,
Who in his mind had suffered many griefs 90
And wars of men, and passed o'er dreadful waves :
Sleeping secure his sufferings he forgot.
When rose that brightest star, who comes to tell
News of the early-born Aurora's light,
Then the sea-going ship approached the isle. 95
There is in Ithaca a certain port,
Sacred to Phorcys, old man of the sea :
Two jutting shores precipitous are there,
Inclining to the port, which outside give
A shelter from the high winds' mighty swell ;
Within the well-benched ships remain unmoored, 100
When to the harbour's limit they have come.
A long-leaved olive at the port's head stands,
And near it a delightful shady grot,
Held sacred to the nymphs called Naiades.

Therein are cups and vessels, formed of stone, 105
And there the bees their honey store away.
There are long looms of stone, whereon the nymphs
Weave their sea-purple robes, a sight to see.
There waters ever flow ; two doors are there,
One to the north, descendible by men ; 110
The other to the south, more sacred ; there
No mortals enter ; 'tis the path for Gods.
Therein they drove, well-knowing it before,
And on the shore the ship ran half its length
With speed, for it by such mens' hands was urged. 115
They, going from the well-benched ship ashore,
First bore Ulysses from the hollow ship,
Both with the linen and the shining rug,
Then laid him on the sand subdued by sleep,
And lifted out the treasures, which to him,
Home, by magnanimous Minerva's aid, 120
Returning, th' excellent Phæacians gave.
These at the olive's root, beyond the path,
They placed together, lest some way-farer,
Before Ulysses woke, should injure them.
Then homeward they returned ; but Neptune still
The threats forgot not which he made against 125
Divine Ulysses, but Jove's counsel asked :
 ' Jove ! father ! I shall no more honoured be
 ' Among the Gods, when men dishonour me,
 ' Phæacians, who from mine own race are sprung. 130
 ' E'en now I said Ulysses should return
 ' Home, having suffered much calamity :
 ' I did not altogether take from him
 ' Return, since thou didst promise it and grant.

‘But they have brought him, sleeping, in a ship
 ‘Across the sea, and placed in Ithaca,
 ‘And given many gifts, both brass and gold 135
 ‘In great abundance, woven vests besides,
 ‘Many, and such as never e’en from Troy
 ‘Ulysses would have taken, had he come
 ‘Unharmed from Troy, and gained his share of spoil.’

Him cloud-compelling Jove addressed, and said :

‘What hast thou said, O Neptune ! ruling wide ? 140
 ‘The Gods do not dishonour thee ; ’twere hard
 ‘They should insult the oldest and the best.
 ‘If any man, on violence and strength
 ‘Relying, does not honour thee, thou hast
 ‘Always revenge thereafter. As thou wilt
 ‘Do thou, and as is pleasing to thy mind.’ 145

Earth-shaking Neptune then to him replied :

‘Soon would I do, O thou by clouds enwrapped !
 ‘As thou advisest ; but I hold in awe
 ‘And shun thine anger : now I would destroy
 ‘The beauteous ship of the Phæacians
 ‘Returned from escort on the gloomy sea, 150
 ‘That from escorting men they may refrain,
 ‘And a great mountain close their city round.’

Him cloud-compelling Jove addressed and said :

‘Good friend ! thus seems it to my mind the best ;
 ‘When from the city all behold the ship 155
 ‘Urged on, to turn it near the land to stone,
 ‘Like a swift ship, that all may be amazed,
 ‘And a great mountain close their city round.’

When Neptune, shaker of the earth, heard this,
 He went to Scheria, where Phæacians live ; 160

There staid he, and the sea-borne ship approached,
 Making swift way. The shaker of the earth
 Drew near and made it stone ; with hand laid flat
 He rooted it beneath, and went his way.

Then the long-oared Phæacians, famed for ships,
 To one another spoke with wingèd words ; 165
 And thus one, looking to his neighbour, said :

‘ Alas ! who has enchained upon the sea
 ‘ The home-bound ship ? just now it all appeared.’
 Thus some one spake, nor knew they what was done.
 Alcinous harangued them thus and said : 170

‘ O sad ! my father’s oracles of old
 ‘ Are come upon me, who was wont to say
 ‘ That Neptune had of us much jealousy,
 ‘ Because of men we safe conductors were.
 ‘ He said that he a very beauteous ship 175
 ‘ Of the Phæacians, some time, coming home
 ‘ From escort on the gloomy sea would wreck,
 ‘ And a great mountain close our city round.
 ‘ Thus spake the old man : all is now fulfilled.
 ‘ Come, let us all obey as I command ;
 ‘ Cease from conveying men, when to our town 180
 ‘ One comes, and sacrifice twelve chosen bulls
 ‘ To Neptune, if compassion he may take,
 ‘ Nor a high mountain close our city round.’

He spake ; they trembled and prepared the bulls.
 Thus the Phæacian chiefs and leaders prayed 185
 To royal Neptune, round the altar placed.

But the divine Ulysses woke from sleep
 In his paternal land, yet knew it not
 Now absent long, for round him poured a cloud

Pallas Minerva, Goddess, child of Jove, 190
To keep him hidden, and to tell him all,
And that nor wife, nor citizens, nor friends
Should recognize him, ere he vengeance took
Upon the suitors for their violence.
So all things to the king seemed different :
The long-continued roads, the shelt'ring ports, 195
The sun-beat rocks, and trees that flourished there.
He rising stood and saw his native land :
He uttered then a groan, and struck his thighs
With down-turned hands, and thus lamenting spoke :
' Ah me ! to what men's country am I come ? 200
' Are they unruly, savage and unjust,
' Or kind to strangers, and of mind devout ?
' Whither this much wealth shall I carry ? where
' Am I a wand'rer ? would I had remained
' With the Phæacians ! to some other king 205
' I might have gone, who would have treated me
' Kindly, and giv'n an escort to return.
' I know not where to place, nor here may leave
' This wealth, lest it to others be a prey.
' Ah ! not in all things were the ruling chiefs
' Of the Phæacians or wise or just, 210
' Who have conveyed me to another land,
' Yet promised they to sunny Ithaca
' Would bring me, but have done it not : may Jove,
' The suppliant's God, who looks on other men
' And punishes the sinner, vengeance take !
' But I will reckon up my wealth and see 215
' If they have taken aught and sailed away.'
He spake, and counted up the tripods fair,

The cauldrons, gold, and beauteous woven vests.
 Not one he missed : then his paternal land
 He mourned for, creeping by the loud sea's shore, 220
 And wailing much. Minerva near him came
 Like a young man, a shepherd, in her form,
 All delicate, as are the sons of kings,
 Having a double well-wrought cloak around
 Her shoulders, sandals on her shining feet, 225
 And in her hand a spear. Ulysses joyed
 To see her, and advancing thus addressed :
 ' Friend ! since I find thee in this country first,
 ' Hail thou ! and meet me not with evil mind.
 ' These goods and me preserve ; as to a God 230
 ' I pray to thee, and thy dear knees approach,
 ' And tell me truly this that I may know ;
 ' What land ? what people this ? who here are born ?
 ' Is it some sunny island, or some shore,
 ' Sea-ward inclined, of the rich continent ? ' 235
 Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, answered him :
 ' Thou 'rt foolish, stranger ! or hast come from far,
 ' Since of this land thou askest ; for indeed
 ' It is not nameless, many know it well,
 ' Both those who tow'rd the dawn and sun abide, 240
 ' And who dwell backward to the gloomy west.
 ' 'Tis rough, and is not traversed by the horse ;
 ' Not very barren, though not widely spread :
 ' Wheat is abundant in it ; there is wine,
 ' And ever rain and fertilizing dew 245
 ' Come down ; 'tis good to feed the goat and ox :
 ' Wood of all kinds and lasting streams there are.
 ' So then the name of Ithaca has reached,

‘O stranger! e’en to Troy, which men report
‘Is from the Grecian land removed afar.’

She spoke: long-suffering Ulysses joyed, 250
Delighted with his father-land, as said
Minerva, child of ægis-bearing Jove;
And in reply he spoke these wingèd words,
Nor spoke the truth, but turned his tale aside,
Ever revolving craft within his breast: 255

‘I heard of Ithaca in spacious Crete,
‘Far o’er the sea, and now myself am come
‘With these possessions. I a fugitive
‘Have to my children left as much behind;
‘For I have slain Idomeneus’ dear son,
‘The swift Orsilochus, who in wide Crete 260

‘Excelled inventive men with rapid feet,
‘Because he wished to rob me of the prey
‘Gained all in Troy, for which within my mind
‘I suffered sorrows, both the wars of men
‘And traversing sad waves, because in Troy
‘I would not with my service gratify 265

‘His father, but was chief o’er other friends.
‘Him, from the country as he came, I struck
‘With brazen spear, with a companion placed
‘In ambush near the road; the dusky night
‘Possessed the heaven, nor did any one
‘Perceive us, but concealed I took his life. 270

‘But, after I had slain him with my sword,
‘I to th’ illustrious Phœnicians went
‘On board a ship, and supplicated them,
‘And gave them booty to delight their mind:
‘Passage to Pylos of them I desired,

‘ Or divine Elis, where th’ Epēans rule. 275
 ‘ But the wind’s violence repulsed them thence
 ‘ Against their will, nor meant they to deceive.
 ‘ Wand’ring from thence we hither came by night.
 ‘ We rowed within the port with haste, nor made
 ‘ Mention of supper, though our need was great ; 280
 ‘ But disembarking lay at random down.
 ‘ Sweet slumber came upon me there fatigued :
 ‘ They took my goods from out the hollow ship,
 ‘ And placed them near where on the sand I lay :
 ‘ Embarking to Sidonia they went, 285
 ‘ But I afflicted in my heart was left.’

He spoke : Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, smiled
 And stroked him with her hand : she made herself
 In figure like a woman, beautiful,
 Large, skilful splendid works to execute,
 And spoke, addressing him with wingèd words : 290
 ‘ Cunning and crafty he who in all wiles
 ‘ Should over-reach thee, though a God should come.
 ‘ Hard man ! of varied plans, insatiable
 ‘ In tricks ; thou art not one who would desist,
 ‘ Not even in thine own land, from deceits
 ‘ In words and wiles, which from thy birth thou lov’st :
 ‘ But let us speak no more of this, for both 295
 ‘ Are skilled in cunning ; thou the best of men
 ‘ In schemes and words ; and I among the Gods
 ‘ Am famed for counsels ; yet thou knew’st me not,
 ‘ Pallas Minerva, child of Jupiter, 300
 ‘ Who always by thee stand, and in all toils
 ‘ Protect thee, and to the Phæacians
 ‘ Made thee a friend ; and now am hither come

‘To weave some counsel with thee, and conceal
‘The wealth which th’ excellent Phæacians gave
‘To thee by my desire returning home ; 305
‘To tell thee of the troubles which ’tis fate
‘That thou shouldst suffer in thy well-built house ;
‘And thou perforce must bear them, nor must tell
‘To any one of man or woman-kind
‘How wand’ring thou hast come, but silent bear
‘Much grief, enduring violence of men.’ 310

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

‘Goddess ! ’tis hard for mortal man who meets
‘To recognize thee, e’en though wise he be,
‘For thou tak’st ev’ry form ; but this I know,
‘That thou before wert ever kind to me,
‘When we, the sons of Greece, made war in Troy. 315
‘When Priam’s lofty city we had sacked
‘And sailed away, and God dispersed the Greeks,
‘I saw thee not, Jove’s daughter ! nor perceived
‘Thee come on board to drive my griefs away.
‘[I wandered, having an afflicted heart, 320
‘Until the Gods released me from my woes ;
‘And in the rich Phæacian land thyself
‘With words didst cheer and bring me to their town.]
‘Now by thy sire I pray thee, (for I think
‘I have not come to sunny Ithaca, 325
‘But wander in some other land, while thou
‘Say’st it in mock’ry to deceive my mind ;)
‘Say if I truly to my home am come.’

Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, answered him :

‘Such ever is the thought within thy breast ; 330
‘Therefore I cannot leave thee in thy woe,

‘ Man as thou art of words, and shrewd and wise.
 ‘ For any other man, who glad returned
 ‘ From wand’ring, would be eager to behold
 ‘ Within his house his children and his wife ;
 ‘ But thee it pleases not to know or ask 335
 ‘ Ere thou hast tried thy wife who in thine house
 ‘ Sits in distress ; and mournful nights and days,
 ‘ While she is ever weeping, wear away.
 ‘ This never I mistrusted, but I knew
 ‘ That, losing all thy friends, thou wouldst return :
 ‘ Yet wished I not with Neptune to contend, 340
 ‘ My father’s brother, who was wroth with thee,
 ‘ Enraged because his dear son thou didst blind.
 ‘ But to convince I’ll shew thee Ithaca :
 ‘ This is of Phorcys, old man of the sea, 345
 ‘ The port, and this the olive at its head.
 ‘ [And near it the delightful shady grot,
 ‘ Held sacred to the nymphs called Naiades.]
 ‘ This is the vaulted cave, where thou wert wont
 ‘ Many whole hecatombs to give the nymphs ; 350
 ‘ This Neriton, a mountain clothed with wood.’

Thus spake the Goddess and dispersed the mist :
 The land was plain to him ; and then rejoiced
 Patient divine Ulysses, charmed to see
 His own dear land, and kissed the fertile plain. 355
 Then to the nymphs, with hands upreared, he prayed :
 ‘ Jove’s daughters ! Naiad nymphs ! I never thought
 ‘ To see you : favour now my loving vows :
 ‘ We will give off’rings, even as before,
 ‘ If the spoil-driving child of Jove permit
 ‘ Myself to live and prosper my dear son.’ 360

Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, him addressed :

‘Be bold, nor be this to thy mind a care.

‘Now in the corner of the cave divine

‘Let us, that safe they be, these goods bestow,

‘And counsel take how things may best be done.’ 365

The Goddess speaking thus retired within

The cavern dark to seek a hiding-place :

Near her Ulysses brought them all, the gold

And the unyielding brass, and well-made vests,

Which the Phæacians gave, and placed them well; 370

And Pallas, child of ægis-bearing Jove,

Minerva, set against the door a stone.

They, sitting near the sacred olive’s root,

Against the haughty suitors plotted death.

Blue-eyed Minerva thus the speech began :

‘Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !

375

‘Deliberate how thou mayst lay thine hands

‘Upon the shameless suitors, who are lords

‘Now for these three years o’er thine house, and woo

‘Thy godlike wife and give her spousal gifts.

‘She, mourning in her mind for thy return,

‘Gives hopes to all, gives promises to each ;

380

‘Sends messages, but other things designs.’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

‘O Gods ! I surely was about to die,

‘As Agamemnon, son of Atreus, died,

‘By evil fate within my house, if thou,

‘O Goddess ! hadst not all things rightly told.

385

‘But weave a plan how I may punish them :

‘Stand by me and bold confidence implant,

‘As when we ravaged Troy’s bright battlements.

‘ If, blue-eyed one ! thou wouldst stand ready near,
 ‘ I could against three hundred men contend, 390
 ‘ With thee, dread Goddess ! if thou wouldst assist.’

Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, answered him :

‘ I will indeed stand by thee, nor shalt thou
 ‘ Be hidden from me when we have prepared
 ‘ These things ; and of the suitors who devour
 ‘ Thy substance some one will, I think, pollute 395
 ‘ The spacious pavement with his blood and brains.
 ‘ Now will I render thee unknown by all ;
 ‘ Wrinkle the fair flesh on thy pliant limbs ;
 ‘ Destroy the yellow hair upon thy head ;
 ‘ Clothe thee in rags, which he who sees will loathe ;
 ‘ Bedim thine eyes so beautiful before, 400
 ‘ That to the suitors thou mayst mean appear,
 ‘ To wife and child whom thou hast left at home.
 ‘ But go thou to the swine-herd first of all,
 ‘ Who tends thy swine and has kind thoughts to thee,
 ‘ Who loves thy son and wise Penelope. 405
 ‘ Thou ’lt find him sitting by the swine ; they feed
 ‘ Near Corax’ rock at Arethusa’s fount,
 ‘ Eating sweet acorns, drinking water dark,
 ‘ Which in the swine abundant fat produce. 410
 ‘ There stay, and sitting by him all enquire,
 ‘ While I to Sparta, famed for women fair,
 ‘ Will go, to call thy son Telemachus,
 ‘ Who to wide Lacedæmon went, to ask
 ‘ Of Menelaus news if still thou liv’st.’ 415

The wise Ulysses answered her : ‘ But why
 ‘ Didst thou not tell him ? thou who knowest all ?
 ‘ Was it that he too, wand’ring o’er the sea,

‘Might suffer griefs while others spoil his goods?’

Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, answered him : 420

‘Let him not be too much within thy mind:

‘I guided him myself, that he might go

‘And gain there fair renown. He now endures

‘No trouble, but in Menelaus’ house

‘Sits quiet, and abundance near him lies.

‘With a black ship indeed in ambush lie 425

‘Young men who seek to kill him, ere he comes

‘To his paternal land ; yet not, I think,

‘Will do it ere the earth shall cover some

‘Of suitors who thy property consume.’

Minerva, speaking, touched him with her rod ;

Wrinkled the fair flesh on his pliant limbs ; 430

Destroyed the yellow hair upon his head ;

Round all his members placed an old man’s skin ;

Bedimmed his eyes, so beautiful before ;

A diff’rent ragged garment and a cloak

Put round him, sordid, with foul smoke begrimed ; 435

O’er him a swift deer’s hairless hide she threw ;

Gave him a staff and an unseemly scrip,

All torn, and on it was a twisted thong.

Thus having planned they parted ; she forthwith

To Sparta went, to fetch Ulysses’ son. 440

BOOK XIV.

FORTH from the port he climbed the rugged path,
Up to the woody country through the heights,
Where Pallas told him that the swineherd was,

Who of the servants whom Ulysses had
Of his possessions took the greatest care.
He found him sitting in the portico, 5
Where in a far-seen place his lodge was built,
High, fair and great, detached, which for the swine
The swineherd, when the king departed, built,
(Nor did his mistress nor Laertes know)
With gathered stones, and topped it up with thorns. 10
Stakes here and there he drove outside all round,
Close, frequent, having cleft the heart of oak.
Within the lodge twelve swinecotes he had made,
Near to each other placed, as beds for swine.
In each were fifty grov'ling swine enclosed, 15
Brood females ; but the males were lodged without,
Much fewer, since the suitors ate them, and reduced
The number : for the swineherd always sent
To them the best of all the well-fed swine :
But there three hundred still and sixty were. 20
Four dogs, like wild beasts, always near them slept,
And these the worthy swineherd had brought up.
He then was fitting sandals to his feet,
Cutting a fair ox-hide ; the rest had gone
Their diff'rent ways ; three with the herded swine ; 25
The fourth, compelled, he to the town had sent
For the proud suitors to convey a swine,
To kill it and content their mind with flesh.
Quickly the barking dogs Ulysses saw
And with loud cry rushed on : Ulysses sate 30
With wariness, the staff fell from his hand.
He in his own lodge would have suffered woe
Unseemly, but the swineherd with swift feet

Rushed to the porch ; the hide fell from his hand ;
And rating drove in diff'rent ways the dogs 35
With frequent stones, and thus addressed the king :

‘ The dogs had nearly killed thee, aged man !
‘ Thus suddenly, and me thou wouldst have blamed.
‘ The Gods have giv’n me other griefs and groans :
‘ Wailing and mourning for my godlike king 40
‘ I sit, and feed fat swine for other men
‘ To eat, while he perhaps in want of food
‘ Is wand’ring somewhere o’er the land and town
‘ Of foreign men, if yet he is alive,
‘ And sees the sun ; but follow me, old man ! 45
‘ And let us go within the lodge, that thou,
‘ When thou art satisfied with food and wine,
‘ Mayst tell me whence thou art, and what thy woes.’

The worthy swineherd spoke and led the way
Within, and made him sit ; thick rushes strewed,
And o’er them spread a shaggy wild goat’s hide, 50
A large thick couch for him : Ulysses joyed
That he received him so, and thus addressed : *Eumæus*

‘ May Jupiter and the immortal Gods
‘ Grant thee, mine host ! whatever thou mayst wish,
‘ Because with kindness thou hast welcomed me !’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply : 55
‘ Stranger ! ’twould not be right, if one should come
‘ More wretched e’en than thou, to treat with scorn
‘ A stranger ; for from Jove all men proceed,
‘ Strangers and beggars : small indeed but kind
‘ Our gift ; for such the way of servants is,
‘ Who always fear whene’er young masters rule. 60
‘ The Gods have hindered the return of him

‘ Who would have loved me and have goods bestowed,
 ‘ Such as a kind lord to his servant gives,
 ‘ (A house, allotment, and a much-wooded wife)
 ‘ Who labours much while God has sped his toil, 65
 ‘ As he has sped the toil on which I wait.
 ‘ Thus would my lord have kindly done to me
 ‘ If he had here grown old, but he is dead.
 ‘ Would that all Helen’s race thus utterly
 ‘ Had died, for she the knees of many loosed !
 ‘ And he too went for Agamemnon’s fame 70
 ‘ To well-horsed Troy, with Trojan men to fight.’

He spake, and quickly girded up his cloak,
 And to the styes wherein the swine were shut
 He went, took two, and brought and killed them both ;
 Singed, cut them up, and fixed them on the spits, 75
 Roasted, and by Ulysses set them all
 Hot, with the spits themselves, and strewed white meal,
 And mingled sweet wine in an ivy bowl ;
 Sate fronting him, and urging thus addressed :

‘ Now, stranger ! eat such food as servants have,
 ‘ Mere pigs ; fat swine the suitors eat, who ne’er 80
 ‘ Of retribution or of pity think.
 ‘ The blessed Gods approve not reckless works,
 ‘ But honour justice and good deeds of men.
 ‘ On enemies and lawless men who go 85
 ‘ On strangers’ lands, to whom Jove booty gives,
 ‘ Who homeward, having filled their ships, return—
 ‘ On them strong fear of retribution falls.
 ‘ But these men must know something, and have heard
 ‘ Some voice of God about his mournful death ;
 ‘ And so they will not either fairly woo 90

‘Or to their own homes go, but recklessly,
‘By force, unsparingly destroy his goods.
‘As many days and nights as come from Jove,
‘Victims, not one or merely two, they slay,
‘And violently draw and waste the wine. 95
‘His substance truly was immense ; to none
‘Of heroes, either on the mainland dark
‘Or Ithaca itself, so much belonged ;
‘Not twenty men together have such wealth.
‘I will recount it. On the continent
‘There are twelve herds ; as many flocks of sheep, 100
‘As many herds of swine, as many flocks
‘Of goats, his hirelings and his herdsmen feed.
‘Eleven large flocks of goats are feeding there
‘On the land’s end, which good men overlook.
‘Each of them ev’ry day conveys one home, 105
‘Which of the fatted goats appears the best.
‘These swine I guard and keep ; the best of all,
‘When I have chosen well, I send to them.’

He spake : Ulysses quickly ate the meat,
And eagerly in silence drank the wine,
And for the suitors meditated woes. 110
When he had supped and braced his mind with food,
Eumæus filled the cup from which he drank
Himself, and gave it to him brimmed with wine :
With joy he took it, and addressed him thus :

‘Who was it, friend ! so rich and powerful, 115
‘Who bought thee, as thou tellest, with his wealth ?
‘Thou say’st he died for Agamemnon’s fame.
‘Tell me, if I perchance such man may know ;
‘For this Jove knows and the immortal Gods,

‘ If I have seen him and could tidings give,
 ‘ Since I have wandered over many lands.’ 120

To him the swineherd, chief of men, replied :

‘ Old man ! no wanderer with news could come,
 ‘ Who would his wife and his dear son persuade ;
 ‘ But wand’ring fellows, seeking after food,
 ‘ Speak lies in vain, nor wish to tell the truth. 125

‘ Whatever vagrant comes to Ithaca
 ‘ Goes to my mistress and false stories tells :
 ‘ Well she receives him, kindly entertains,
 ‘ Puts many questions and sheds tears the while,
 ‘ A woman’s wont whose husband far off dies. 130

‘ Thou, too, old man ! wouldst quickly forge a tale
 ‘ If one a cloak and tunic would bestow.

‘ Already from his bones swift birds and dogs
 ‘ Have torn away the skin, and life has fled ;
 ‘ Or fishes in the sea have eaten him, 135

‘ And on the shore his bones lie wrapt in sand :
 ‘ So has he perished, and to friends behind,
 ‘ And specially to me, are sorrows caused.

‘ No other lord so gentle shall I find ;
 ‘ E’en to my father’s and my mother’s house 140

‘ Were I to go, where I was born and bred.

‘ Nor weep I so for them, howe’er I wish

‘ To see them in my own paternal land,

‘ As now Ulysses absent I regret.

‘ Stranger ! With reverence I name him, though
 ‘ Not present, for he loved and cared for me ; 145

‘ Whom, far away, I elder brother call.’

To him long-suffering Ulysses said :

‘ Friend ! since thou putt’st it from thee, and still sayst

- ‘That he will not return, and since thy mind 150
 ‘Is unbelieving, not with words I say,
 ‘But with an oath, Ulysses will return.
 ‘For my good tidings let there guerdon be :
 ‘Forthwith, as soon as to his home he comes,
 ‘[With vest and tunic clothe me, garments fair].
 ‘Before, though needy, I would nothing take. 155
 ‘Hateful to me as Hades’ gates is he
 ‘Who yields to poverty and falsehood tells.
 ‘First, of the Gods let Jove a witness be,
 ‘This hospitable table, and the hearth
 ‘Of famed Ulysses unto which I come,
 ‘All this shall be accomplished as I say : 160
 ‘In this same year Ulysses shall return.
 ‘[When this month wanes and when the next arrives,
 ‘Home he will come, and vengeance take on him
 ‘Who here insults his wife and noble son.]’
 Swineherd Eumæus ! thus thou didst reply :
 ‘Old man ! for news no guerdon shall I pay,
 ‘Nor will Ulysses to his home return.
 ‘Drink thou in peace, and let us other things
 ‘Discuss, nor these to my remembrance call :
 ‘For surely in my breast my mind is grieved 170
 ‘When any mention of the good king make.
 ‘We will, indeed, omit the oath : but may
 ‘Ulysses come, as I, Penelope,
 ‘Laertes and Telemachus desire !
 ‘Now for the boy I weep incessantly,
 ‘Telemachus, whose sire Ulysses is.
 ‘For him the Gods have nourished like a plant. 175
 ‘I thought he would not be inferior,

‘ (For form and stature, among men admired),
 ‘ To his dear father : some one of the Gods
 ‘ Or men has injured his well-balanced mind,
 ‘ For he is gone for tidings of his sire
 ‘ To sacred Pylos ; but ere home he comes 180
 ‘ The suitors lie in ambush, that the race
 ‘ May perish of divine Arcesias
 ‘ From Ithaca, and be without a name.
 ‘ But we will leave him : him, if he be caught
 ‘ Or he escape, may Saturn’s son protect !
 ‘ But come, old man ! and thine own woes relate, 185
 ‘ And tell me truly this, that I may know ;
 ‘ Who and whence art thou ? where thy city ? where
 ‘ Thy parents ? in what ship thou hither cam’st ?
 ‘ How thee the sailors brought to Ithaca ?
 ‘ Who do they boast to be ? for not, I think,
 ‘ Couldst thou at all have hither come by land !’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ I will then truly all these things relate.
 ‘ If we had food and wine to last as long
 ‘ Within thy lodge, and quietly could feast
 ‘ While others did the labour, not with ease 195
 ‘ In a whole year could I completely tell
 ‘ The sorrows of my soul ; how much in all
 ‘ By instigation of the Gods I’ve borne.
 ‘ From the broad Crete I boast my race to be ;
 ‘ A rich man’s son : and many other sons 200
 ‘ Were in his palace, both brought up and born
 ‘ From his own wife legitimate ; but me
 ‘ A purchased mother bore, a concubine.
 ‘ Yet Castor, Hylas’ son, whose child I am,

‘Honoured me as he did his true-born sons.
‘He was among the Cretans as a God, 205
‘Respected by the people for his wealth,
‘For his prosperity and famous sons ;
‘But death’s fates bore him off to Pluto’s house,
‘And his proud sons divided and cast lots
‘For his possessions ; but to me they gave
‘A very little, and a house assigned. 210
‘A wife I married, born of wealthy men,
‘By reason of my valour ; for I was
‘Nor vain nor cowardly : now all has failed.
‘Still when thou see’st the straw thou’lt know, I think,
‘[What was the ear ;] though much woe weighs me
down. 215
‘Mars and Minerva gave me bravery,
‘And pow’r to break men’s ranks whene’er I chose
‘The best men for an ambush, causing ills
‘To foes ; nor ever did my noble mind
‘Set death before my eyes, but first by far
‘I, leaping onward, with my javelin slew 220
‘What foemen yielded to me with their feet.
‘In war such was I ; not by me was loved
‘Labour, nor household thrift which nourishes
‘Illustrious children, but the oar-urged ships,
‘Wars, polished spears and arrows, mournful things 225
‘And shuddered at by others, these were loved,—
‘Were loved, for these the Gods placed in my mind.
‘For diff’rent men are pleased with diff’rent deeds.
‘Before the sons of Greece embarked for Troy,
‘Nine times o’er men and rapid ships I ruled 230
‘Against strange men, and much fell to my share,

‘ From which I chose what pleased me, and obtained
‘ Much afterwards by lot, and speedily
‘ My household was increased, and I became
‘ Great and respected by the Cretan men.
‘ But when far-seeing Jupiter had planned 235
‘ This hateful expedition, which has loosed
‘ The knees of many men, they ordered me
‘ And the renowned Idomeneus to lead
‘ Their ships to Troy, nor way was to refuse,
‘ For the stern clamour of the people urged.
‘ There for nine years we sons of Greece waged war, 240
‘ But in the tenth we Priam’s city sacked
‘ And homeward in our ships embarked, but God
‘ Dispersed the Greeks. For miserable me
‘ Jove ill devised. I but a month remained,
‘ Delighting in my children and my wife
‘ Wedded a virgin, and my wealth ; and then 245
‘ My mind to Egypt bade me voyage make,
‘ Equipping well my ships with noble friends :
‘ Nine I equipped ; the people gathered soon,
‘ Six days my dear companions feasted there ;
‘ I gave them many victims, to the Gods 250
‘ To offer sacrifice and feast themselves :
‘ But on the seventh we from Crete embarked,
‘ And with a clear fair north wind sailed along
‘ With ease, as down a stream, and of the ships
‘ Not one was injured ; healthy and unscathed 255
‘ We sate, while wind and helmsman kept them
 straight.
‘ On the fifth day to Egypt, watered well,
‘ We came, and in Egyptus’ stream I moored

‘The two-banked ships : I bade then my dear friends
‘There by the ships to stay and draw them up, 260
‘And urged the watchmen to the heights to go.
‘But, yielding to their pride and following
‘Their own device, they speedily laid waste
‘The beauteous fields of the Egyptians,
‘Their wives and infant children took and slew
‘The men : and soon the cry the city reached. 265
‘Hearing the tumult, with th’ appearing morn,
‘They came, and all the plain with foot and horse,
‘And with the gleaming of the brass was filled.
‘Jove, who delights in thunder, on my friends
‘Sent a base panic, nor did any dare
‘Resist, for evil stood on all sides round. 270
‘Then with sharp brass they many of us slew,
‘And some they took away alive, to work
‘By force ; but Jove himself within my mind
‘This counsel put. (I would that I had died
‘And met my fate in Egypt there, for still 275
‘Calamity awaited me ;) I took
‘The well-made helmet from my head, the shield
‘From off my shoulders, from my hand the spear,
‘And went to meet the horses of the king,
‘And kissed his knees ; he saved and pitied me
‘And in his chariot took me weeping home. 280
‘Many rushed at me with their ashen spears
‘Seeking to kill me ; so enraged they were ;
‘But he repelled them, and the wrath of Jove,
‘The strangers’ God, respected, who is wroth
‘At evil deeds.—There seven years I stayed, 285
‘And got much wealth among th’ Egyptian men ;

‘ For all gave presents : when the eighth came round,
‘ One from Phœnicia came, in craft well-skilled,
‘ A greedy knave who did much ill to men,
‘ Who by his cunning o’er-persuaded me, 290
‘ Till at Phœnicia we had arrived,
‘ Where his abode and his possessions lay.
‘ There for a whole year with him I remained.
‘ When of a circling year the months and days
‘ Were now completed, and the hours came on,
‘ On a sea-going ship he placed me, bound
‘ For Libya, inventing lies that I 295
‘ Might with him take a cargo, but in truth
‘ To get me there and gain a weighty price.
‘ Mistrusting, by necessity I went
‘ On board : the ship with fair north wind ran on
‘ Midway o’er Crete, but Jove their ruin planned. 300
‘ When Crete we left, nor any other land
‘ Was now in sight, but only sky and sea,
‘ The son of Saturn placed an azure cloud
‘ Above the ship ; the sea beneath grew dark ;
‘ Jove thundered frequently and hurled a bolt 305
‘ Against the ship, which, stricken by Jove’s bolt,
‘ Reeled and was filled with sulphur ; all fell off,
‘ And floated round the ship upon the waves
‘ Like gulls, and God took their return away.
‘ But Jove for me, while grieving in my mind, 310
‘ Placed in my hands himself the dark-prowed ship’s
‘ Unbroken mast, that I might death escape.
‘ Clinging thereto by fierce winds I was borne.
‘ Nine days I floated ; on the tenth black night
‘ A mighty rolling billow drifted me

- ‘ Upon the land of the Thesprotian men. 315
‘ The hero Pheidon, the Thesprotian king,
‘ Without reward, took care of me ; his son
‘ Led me, subdued by cold and weariness,
‘ To his own home, and raised me by the hand,
‘ Till to his father’s palace I had come,
‘ And clothed me with a tunic and a cloak. 320
‘ There heard I of Ulysses, for he said
‘ That he had entertained him and received
‘ With kindness, going to his native land.
‘ The wealth Ulysses had collected, brass,
‘ Gold, and much wrought steel, he showed to me.
‘ To the tenth generation ’twould a man 325
‘ Maintain : such treasures in the king’s house lay.
‘ He said that he had to Dodona gone,
‘ To ask the counsel of the Deity,
‘ From the high-branching oak of Jupiter,
‘ How he might, openly or secretly,
‘ To Ithaca, now absent long return. 330
‘ And, as he made libation in his house,
‘ He sware to me myself that even then
‘ Launched was the ship and ready were the friends
‘ Who would convey him to his native land.
‘ But me he first sent off ; by chance a ship
‘ Of the Thesprotians to Dulichium 335
‘ In wheat abounding, was about to go.
‘ He ordered them to take me carefully
‘ To king Acastus, but an evil plan
‘ About me pleased their mind, that I might still
‘ Have sorrow added to calamity.
‘ But when the ship had from the land sailed far,

‘They planned for me the day of slavery ; 340
 ‘They stripped me of my garments, vest and cloak,
 ‘And round me placed a sordid rag and coat,
 ‘All torn, which thou mayst with thine eyes behold,
 ‘And came at eve to sunny Ithaca ;
 ‘And there they bound me in the well-benched ship
 ‘Firm with a well-twined rope ; and they with haste 345
 ‘Debarking by the sea’s shore supper took.
 ‘The Gods themselves with ease untied the bond ;
 ‘And wrapping round my head a rag, I down
 ‘The polished rudder came, and made my breast 350
 ‘Approach the sea ; then swimming on I rowed
 ‘With both my hands, and soon was far away.
 ‘Then climbing in the thicket of a wood
 ‘I cowering lay ; they groaning roamed about,
 ‘But thought it best to make no further search, 355
 ‘And went again on board the hollow ship.
 ‘The Gods themselves concealed me easily,
 ‘And brought me to a prudent man’s abode ;
 ‘For it is fated still that I should live.’

Swineherd Eumeus ! thou didst thus reply : 360
 ‘O wretched stranger ! thou hast roused my mind
 ‘Exceedingly by telling all these things,
 ‘How thou hast suffered and hast wandered much.
 ‘Yet cannot this, I think, be true, and thou,
 ‘When speaking of Ulysses, shalt not make
 ‘Me to believe it. Is it fit that thou,
 ‘Such as thou art, shouldst lie thus recklessly ? 365
 ‘Myself I well know of my king’s return,
 ‘How he was greatly hated by the Gods,
 ‘Because they neither conquered him among

‘The Trojans, nor among his friends, when he
‘The toil of war had ended. Then the Greeks
‘Would all have joined to make his sepulchre,
‘And for his son he glory would have gained : 370
‘Him harpies now have snatched ingloriously.
‘I am retired among the swine, nor go,
‘Unless the wise Penelope invites
‘When comes report from somewhere, to the town.
‘Some sitting near him ev’ry thing inquire, 375
‘Both they who grieve for the long absent king,
‘And they who gladly with impunity
‘Consume his substance : me it pleases not
‘To seek or ask, since an Ætolian man
‘Deceived me by his tale, who, having slain
‘A man and wandered o’er much earth, arrived 380
‘At my abode, whom kindly I received.
‘He said he saw him with Idomeneus
‘Among the Cretans, putting in repair
‘His ships, which storms had shattered, and that he
‘Would in the summer or the autumn come,
‘Bringing much wealth, with his heroic friends. 385
‘And thou, much suffering old man ! since God
‘Has brought thee to me, do not gratify
‘Nor soothe me with false tales, since not for them
‘Will I respect or love thee, but because
‘I fear the strangers’ Jove and pity thee.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said : 390

‘Thy mind is in thy breast incredulous ;
‘Since not by oaths I move thee nor persuade.
‘Come let us now a compact make, and let
‘Th’ Olympian Gods be witnesses to both :

‘ If to this house thy master should return, 395
 ‘ Arraying me in vest and tunic send,
 ‘ Where my mind wishes, to Dulichium :
 ‘ But, should thy master come not as I say,
 ‘ Thy servants bid to throw me from a rock,
 ‘ That other beggars may such flatt’ry shun.’ 400

The noble swineherd answered him and said :

‘ Stranger ! to me good fame and eminence
 ‘ Now and hereafter among men would be,
 ‘ If I who brought thee to my lodge, and gifts
 ‘ Of hospitality on thee bestowed,
 ‘ Should kill thee, and thy dear life take away ; 405
 ‘ And cheerfully I then should pray to Jove.
 ‘ But now ’tis time for supper ; very soon
 ‘ Will my companions be within, that we
 ‘ A pleasant meal may in the lodge prepare.’

Such words they thus to one another spoke.

The swine, and men that fed the swine, drew near ; 410
 They shut them in th’ accustomed place to sleep ;
 And from the penned-up swine great clamour rose.
 Then to his friends the swineherd gave command :
 ‘ Bring hither of the swine the best, that I
 ‘ May kill it for the guest who comes from far ;
 ‘ And we too will enjoy it, who endure 415
 ‘ Fatigue a long while for the white-tusked swine,
 ‘ While others eat our unrequited toil.’

So speaking he with hard steel cleft the logs ;
 And they a five-year old fat swine brought in.
 They placed it on the hearth ; the swineherd then 420
 Was not forgetful of th’ immortal Gods,
 For he good thoughts possessed ; but in the fire

Threw as an off'ring first the hairs that grew
Upon the forehead of the white-tusked swine ;
And prayed to all the Gods that to his home
The wise Ulysses might at last return.

He lifting struck it with an oaken log, 425

Which cleaving he had left there, and it died.

They cut and singed and quickly into joints

Divided it ; the swineherd put raw meat

On the rich fat and made an offering

From all the limbs, and some upon the fire

He threw, and sprinkled with the flour of meal.

The other parts they minced and stuck on spits, 430

Roasted them skilfully, and drew all off,

And placed them thickly on the chopping-blocks.

The swineherd rose to carve, for in his mind

He well knew what was right ; dividing it

He into seven portions parted all ;

One to the nymphs and Hermes, Maia's son, 435

With pray'r he placed ; the rest he gave to each,

But honoured with the white-tusked swine's long chine

Ulysses, and rejoiced the monarch's mind.

Prudent Ulysses spoke to him and said :

' Be dear to Jove, Eumæus ! as to me, 440

' Who one like me with good gifts honourest ! '

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply :

' Eat, worthy guest ! and in whate'er there is

(' Rejoice ; God one thing gives and one withholds,

' As pleases him ; for all things he can do. '

He spake, and to th' immortal Gods he made 445

First offerings, and pouring forth dark wine

In city-ravaging Ulysses' hands

He placed it, and by his own portion sate.
To them Mesaulius divided bread,
Whom of himself the swineherd had acquired,
His master being absent, neither did 450
His mistress nor the old Laertes know,
And with his own wealth from the Taphians bought.
Upon the food prepared their hands they threw.
When they with meat and drink were satisfied,
Mesaulius removed the food, and they
Hasted to bed with bread and flesh replete. 455
The night came bad and moonless: Jove all night
Rained, and the mighty wat'ry west wind blew.
Trying the swineherd thus Ulysses spoke,
To see if he would taking off his cloak 460
Give it, or some one of his friends would urge
To give, since for him he had great regard.
'Eumæus! hear, and all ye other friends!
'I boasting speak, for madd'ning wine excites,
'Which even makes the wise man sing aloud,
'Laugh in a foolish manner, makes him dance, 465
'And utter some word better left unsaid:
'I who cry out the first will nothing hide.
'Would I were young, and that my strength were firm,
'As when we planned an ambush under Troy;
'Ulysses, Menelaus, Atreus' son, 470
'Were leaders: I, for so they bade, ruled third.
'When to the town and lofty wall we came,
'We round the city, in the brushwood thick,
'Among the reeds and marsh, lay cowering
'In arms, and night inclement, frosty came,
'The north wind blowing; snow, as hoar-frost cold, 475

‘ Came down, and ice congealed around our shields.
‘ The others all of them had vests and cloaks,
‘ Slept quietly, and covered with their shields
‘ Their shoulders. I when I set out had left
‘ My cloak with my companions, carelessly, 480
‘ Nor thought to shudder with excessive cold,
‘ But went with only shield and shining belt.
‘ ’Twas the third watch of night, the stars had gone ;
‘ I touching with my elbow thus addressed
‘ Ulysses near me, and he quickly heard : 485
‘ “ Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !
‘ “ I shall no longer with the living be ;
‘ “ Cold weather conquers me ; no cloak have I ;
‘ “ A Deity decoyed me with one vest
‘ “ To come ; from this there now is no escape : ”
‘ I spake : he then had this thought in his mind, 490
‘ For such was he to counsel and to fight ;
‘ And, speaking in an undertone, he said
‘ “ Hush now ! lest some one of the Greeks should hear. ”
‘ He spake, and on his elbow raised his head,
‘ And said, “ Hear, friends ! a dream divine has come
‘ “ Upon me sleeping : from the ships afar 495
‘ “ We ’ve come ; let one to Agamemnon go,
‘ “ The son of Atreus, of the people chief,
‘ “ That he may bid more from the ships to come. ”
‘ He spoke ; then Thoas rose, Andræmon’s son,
‘ With speed and laid his purple cloak aside, 500
‘ And hasted to the ships : I in his vest
‘ Lay gladly, and the gold-throned morning dawned.
‘ Would I as young were, and my strength as firm !
‘ One of the swineherd in the stall would then
‘ A cloak bestow upon me, both from love

‘And rev’rence for a worthy man ; but now 505
‘They disregard me wearing mean attire.’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply :
‘Old man ! the narrative which thou hast told
‘Is excellent, nor hast thou said a word
‘Or wrong or profitless ; thou shalt not want 510
‘Garment or any other thing which fits
‘A suff’ring suppliant to meet with now :
‘But in the morning thou shalt don thy rags ;
‘Not many cloaks and change of vests are here
‘To dress in, but for each man only one.
‘[But when Ulysses’ dear son shall arrive, 515
‘Garments, a cloak and tunic, he will give,
‘And send thee where thy heart and mind desire.]’

Thus speaking up he sprang, and near the fire
Placed a couch for him and upon it threw
Sheep-skins and goat-skins ; there Ulysses lay, 520
And over him a thick large cloak he cast,
Which gave a change of dress for him to wear
When any dreadful tempest should arise.
There slept Ulysses ; near him slept the youths :
But a bed there did not the swineherd please 525
Far from the swine to lie ; but going out
He armed himself : Ulysses joyed to see
That of his substance, while so far away,
He took such care : round his strong shoulders first
He threw a sharp sword ; then a cloak put on
To keep the wind off, very thick ; and took
The fleecy skin of a large well-fed goat, 530
And a sharp spear to ward off dogs and men,
And went, where slept the swine, to lie beneath
A rock, a shelter from the northern blast.

BOOK XV. *Q. 159*

Pallas Minerva to wide Sparta went,
To put Ulysses' noble son in mind
Of his return, and urge him to go home.
Telemachus and Nestor's noble son
She found in famous Menelaus' porch 5
Reclining ; Nestor's son indeed subdued
By gentle sleep, but on Telemachus
No sweet sleep came, for in his mind he stirred
Cares for his father through th' ambrosial night.
Blue-eyed Minerva standing near him said :
' Telemachus ! it is not well that thou 10
' Far from thy home shouldst wander, in the house
' Leaving thy goods and such o'erbearing men,
' Lest they, dividing, should consume them all,
' And thou a journey shouldst have made in vain.
' But urge thou Menelaus, good in fight,
' With speed to send thee, that thou find at home 15
' Thy mother, whom her sire and brothers bid
' To wed Eurymachus (for he excels
' The suitors all in gifts, and has increased
' The bridal presents), lest against thy will
' He from thine house some property remove.
' Thou know'st what mind is in a woman's breast : 20
' She wishes to enrich the house of him
' Who weds her, nor her former children more
' Remembers, and her virgin-wedded spouse,
' Who now is dead, nor after him enquires.
' Go thou thyself, and ev'ry thing entrust
' To her who of the hand-maids seems the best, 25

'Till the Gods show thee an illustrious wife.
 'Another thing I tell thee ; weigh it well :
 'The chiefest of the suitors, carefully
 'Hidden in ambush in the narrow sea
 'Of Ithaca and rocky Samos, lie
 'Seeking to kill thee ere thou reach thy home. 30
 'This will not be, I ween ; earth first will hold
 'Some of the suitors who thy wealth consume.
 'Far from the islands keep thy well-built ship,
 'And sail besides by night ; some God, who guards
 'And rescues thee, will send a fav'ring breeze : 35
 'But when to Ithaca's first shore thou com'st
 'Thy ship and all friends to the city send,
 'And to the swineherd go thou first of all,
 'Who guards thy swine and has kind thoughts to thee :
 'There sleep the night, and send him to the town 40
 'To tell the tidings to Penelope,
 'That thou art safe and hast from Pylos come.'

She spake and to the high Olympus went.
 But he from sweet sleep Nestor's son aroused,
 [With his heel moving him, and thus addressed :] 45
 'Rise, Nestor's son ! Pisistratus ! and bring
 'The solid-footed steeds, and to the car
 'Yoke them that we our journey may perform.'

Then Nestor's son, Pisistratus, replied :
 'Telemachus ! it cannot be that we,
 'Though on our journey hastening, should drive
 'Through the dark night, but soon it will be dawn ; 50
 'Stay till the hero famous for his spear,
 'The son of Atreus, Menelaus, comes,
 'And bringing gifts shall place them in the car,

‘ And with kind words addressing, send us off :
‘ For a guest holds in mem’ry all his days
‘ The hospitable man who friendship shows.’ 55

He spake, and gold-throned morning quickly came
Then Menelaus, good in war, approached,
Leaving his couch by Helen with fair hair.
When him the dear son of Ulysses saw,
With haste the hero donned a shining vest,
O’er his strong shoulders threw an ample cloak, 60
[Telemachus, divine Ulysses’ son]

Went to the door, and standing by him said :
‘ O Menelaus ! thou Jove-nurtured son
‘ Of Atreus, of the people chieftain ! now
‘ Send me away to my dear native land, 65
‘ For my mind wishes to my home to go.’

To him the warlike Menelaus said :
‘ Telemachus ! I will not long detain
‘ Thee eager to return. With any one
‘ I should be angry, who receives a guest,
‘ If he should love or hate him over-much : 70
‘ The mean is always best ; ’tis equally
‘ An evil if he drive a guest away
‘ Unwilling to return, or one detain
‘ Desirous to depart : [’tis fit a guest
‘ Present to love and when he wills to speed]
‘ But stay till I some beauteous gifts shall bring, 75
‘ And place them in the chariot, which thou
‘ Mayst with thine eyes behold, and till I tell
‘ The women in the palace to prepare
‘ A feast sufficient of what is within.
‘ It is a glory, honour, and delight

‘To set out o’er a vast and boundless track
‘After a feast : if thou dost wish to go
‘Through Hellas and mid-Argos, I myself 80
‘Upon thee would attend and yoke the steeds,
‘And lead thee to men’s cities ; nor will one
‘Send us away in vain, but will bestow
‘To carry with us some one thing at least,
‘Some tripod, or some cauldron made of brass,
‘Two mules, it may be, or a golden cup.’ 85

The wise Telemachus replied and said :

‘O Menelaus ! thou Jove-nurtured son
‘Of Atreus, of the people chieftain ! I
‘To my own household now desire to go ;
‘(Over my goods I left no guard behind)
‘Lest while I seek my sire myself am lost, 90
‘Or some good treasure perish from my house.

But this when warlike Menelaus heard,
He to his wife and handmaids quickly gave
Command, of things that in the palace were
Abundantly a banquet to prepare.

Then Eteōneus, of Boëthes son,
Arising from his couch came near ; not far 95
Away he dwelt ; and him a fire to light
And flesh to roast brave Menelaus bade,
Nor when he heard him did he disobey.
Then to his fragrant chamber went he, not alone ; 100
Helen and Megapenthes with him went.
But when they came to where the treasures lay
The son of Atreus took a double cup,
And his son Megapenthes bade to bring
A silver bowl ; and Helen to the chests

Where the all-variegated garments were,
Which she herself had laboured at, approached. 105
Helen, of women most divine, took one,
Most beautiful in its embroidery
And largest ; like a star it shone, and lay
Lowest of all ; and through the house they went
Till to Telemachus they came, and him
The fair-haired Menelaus thus addressed : 110
‘ Telemachus ! may Jove, the thund’ring spouse
‘ Of Juno, so accomplish thy return
‘ As thou thyself desirest in thy mind !
‘ Of gifts, whatever treasures in my house
‘ Are laid, the fairest and the costliest
‘ I will bestow : A goblet I will give 115
‘ Of silver wrought ; its lips are bound with gold,
‘ The work of Vulcan ; hero Phædimus,
‘ The king of the Sidonians, gave it me,
‘ When his house sheltered me on my return :
‘ And this I willingly on thee bestow.’

The hero, son of Atreus, speaking thus, 120
Placed in his hands the double cup ; the bowl
Shining with silver Megapenthes brought,
And placed before him ; fair-cheeked Helen next
Stood near him, holding in her hand the vest,
And with these words addressed Telemachus :
‘ And I too give to thee, dear child ! this gift 125
‘ As a memorial of Helen’s hands,
‘ Against thy wished-for marriage for thy wife
‘ To wear, and till then let it in thy house
‘ Remain with thy dear mother. Mayst thou reach
‘ With joy thy well-built house and native land !’

She spake, and gave it ; he with joy received. 130
Of these the brave Pisistratus took charge,
Stowed in the car and wondered as he gazed.
The fair-haired Menelaus to the house
Led them, and there on seats and thrones they sate.
In a fair golden ewer a handmaid brought 135
Water, and poured it o'er a silver vase
To wash, and spread a polished table near ;
The venerable house-keeper brought bread :
[Placed cates and pleased them with the things at hand.]
Boëthes son both carved and shared the flesh. 140
Famed Menelaus' son poured forth the wine,
And on the feast prepared their hands they threw.
When they with drink and meat were satisfied,
Telemachus and Nestor's noble son
The horses yoked, and climbed the painted car, 145
And from the door and sounding porch they drove.
But fair-haired Menelaus followed them ;
His right hand bore sweet wine in golden cup,
That having made libation they might go.
Fronting the steeds he pledged them and addressed :
' Youths ! fare ye well ! bid royal Nestor hail : 150
' He ever was to me as father kind,
' While we, the sons of Greeks, made war in Troy.'
Prudent Telemachus replied and said :
' Aye ! truly will we, thou Jove-nurtured one ! 155
' On our arrival tell him all thou bidst.
' Would that I so, to Ithaca returned,
' Might, having found Ulysses in the house,
' Tell him of all the friendship I received
' From thee, and how I many fair gifts bring !'

A bird flew on his right hand as he spoke, 160
An eagle, bearing in his claws a goose,
Large, white, and tame, from out the poultry-yard,
While men and women shouted in pursuit.
It to the right before the horses rushed ;
With joy all saw it and their minds were glad. 165
Them Nestor's son, Pisistratus, addressed :
'Jove-nurtured Menelaus ! prince of men !
'Bethink thee if to us or to thyself
'It is that Jove has sent this prodigy.'

He spake : brave Menelaus taking thought
Deliberated how to answer right ; 170
But long-robed Helen interrupting said :
'Hear me ! I what th' immortal Gods suggest,
'And as I think 'twill be, will prophesy.
'As this bird, coming from the mountain-top
'Where were its race and birth, has seized a goose, 175
'In the house fattened, so Ulysses home,
'Much having suffered, having wandered far,
'Will come and vengeance take ; or even now
'Is there and woes for all the suitors plans.'

Prudent Telemachus to her replied :
'May Jove, of Juno the loud-thund'ring spouse, 180
'Grant that it be so ! and then even there
'I will as to a God make vows to thee.'

He spake, and lashed the horses ; they with speed
Rushed eager through the city to the plain
And shook all day the neck-encircling yoke.
The sun had set, and all the ways were dark : 185
They Pheræ reached, the house of Diocles
Son of Orsilochus, Alphæus' son ; -

There slept, for he gave hospitality.

When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,

They yoked the horses, climbed the painted car, 190

And from the door and sounding porch they drove.

He whipped the steeds which not unwilling flew :

Quickly to Pylos' lofty town they came.

Then spake Telemachus to Nestor's son :

'Say, son of Nestor ! couldst thou promise me 195

'To do my bidding ? We with truth profess

'That from our fathers' friendship we are friends ;

'But we are also of an equal age,

'And this our journey will unite us more.'

'Take me not past the ship, but leave me here,

'Lest the old man detain me in his house, 200

'Eager to entertain me, but against

'My wish : 'tis fit that I should go with speed.'

He spoke : the son of Nestor in his mind

Thought how to promise rightly and perform.

This, as he thought, appeared the better plan :

To the swift ships and shore he turned the steeds, 205

Took out the beauteous gifts and in the stern

Placed vest and gold which Menelaus gave ;

And urging spoke to him these wingèd words :

'With haste embark and summon all thy friends

'Ere I go home and tell my aged sire. 210

'His haughty spirit in my mind I know ;

'He will not let thee go, but will himself

'Come hither to invite thee, nor, I think,

'Wilt thou go empty, but he will be wroth.'

Thus having said, he drove his fair-haired steeds 215

Quick to the Pylian town, and reached his home.

Telemachus then urged his friends and said :
‘ Arrange, my friends ! the tackle in the ship,
‘ Let us embark our voyage to perform.’

He spoke : forthwith they heard him and obeyed ; 220
Quick they embarked and on the benches sate.
He too was toiling at these things, and prayed,
And to Minerva offered sacrifice
By the ship’s stern. A foreigner approached,
A soothsayer, from Argos fugitive,
One who had slain a man in family
Descended from Melampus, who of yore 225
Had dwelt in Pylos, mother-land of sheep,
Rich and inhabiting a house of note
Among the Pylians, but was going then
To a strange people, flying from his home
And Neleus, most renowned of living men,
Who for a year complete kept all his goods 230
By violence, and he meanwhile was bound
With grievous chain in th’ house of Phylacus,
Bearing for Neleus’ daughter heavy woes,
And for the grief which in his mind had caused
The Fury, Goddess unapproachable.
But he escaped destruction, and the beeves 235
Lowling from Phylacè to Pylos drove,
And upon God-like Neleus took revenge
For his unseemly deed, and brought a wife
Home for his brother. To another land,
Argos for breeding horses famed, he went,
For it was fated for him there to dwell,
And over many Argives to be king. 240
A wife he married, built a lofty house,

Begat Antiphates and Mantius,
 Two noble sons : Antiphates begat
 Magnanimous Oicles ; he begat
 Amphiarāus, rousing men to war,
 Whom Ægis-bearing Jove and Phæbus loved 245
 With ev'ry kind of friendship in their heart.
 Yet reached he not the threshold of old-age,
 But through a woman's gifts he died in Thebes.
 Two sons, Alcmaeon and Amphilocheus,
 To him were born : of Mantius again
 Cleitus and Polypheides were the sons.
 The golden-throned Aurora snatched away 250
 Cleitus by reason of his beauteous form,
 That he might dwell among th' immortal Gods.
 The noble Polypheides Phæbus made
 A soothsayer by far most excellent
 Of mortals, when Amphiarāus died.
 He, angry with his father, migrated
 To Hyperesia, and dwelling there
 Gave to all mortal men his oracles. 255
 His son, named Theoclymenus, stood near
 Telemachus, whom by the swift black ship
 He found libations offering and pray'rs,
 And calling to him spake these wingèd words :
 ' Friend ! since I find thee sacrificing here, 260
 ' I pray thee by thine off'rings, by the God,
 ' And by the heads too of thyself and friends,
 ' Tell, when I ask thee, truth nor aught conceal :
 ' Whence comest thou ? thy town and parents where ?
 Prudent Telemachus replied and said : 265
 ' Stranger ! I will then speak with perfect truth :

‘I am from Ithaca by birth ; my sire,
 ‘Ulysses, if indeed he were alive ;
 ‘But he has perished by a mournful death,
 ‘And therefore came I, taking friends and ship,
 ‘News of my father, absent long, to seek.’ 270

The Godlike Theoclymenus replied :

‘And I too from my country am away,
 ‘Having a man of mine own kindred slain.
 ‘His brethren and his friends are numerous
 ‘In Argos, and bear rule among the Greeks :
 ‘From them I fly, avoiding death and fate. 275
 ‘So ’tis my lot to wander among men,
 ‘Lest they should slay me. Place me in thy ship,
 ‘Since in my flight I am thy suppliant,
 ‘For I suppose that they are in pursuit !’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

‘I will not, since it is thy wish to go, 280
 ‘Repulse thee from my ship ; but follow me,
 ‘Thou shalt be welcomed there with what we have.’

He spoke, and took from him his brazen spear,
 And laid it on the well-oared vessel’s deck ;
 On the sea-going ship himself embarked,
 Sate at the stern, and Theoclymenus 285
 Placed by his side, and they the cables loosed.
 Telemachus bade urgently his friends
 To fit the tackling ; freely they obeyed.
 The fir-wood mast they reared and fixed within
 The hollow socket, and made fast with ropes, 290
 And drew the white sails up with well-twined thongs.
 Blue-eyed Minerva sent a fav’ring breeze
 Which through the air blew sharply, that with speed

The ship might o'er the sea's salt water run.
 [Cruni and Calchis with fair streams they passed] 295
 The sun had set and all the ways were dark ;
 The ship reached Phëæ, urged by Jove's fair breeze,
 And sacred Elis where Epēans rule ;
 Thence by the swift-retreating isles he steered,
 In doubt or death to flee from or be caught. 300

Meanwhile Ulysses and the swineherd supped
 Within the tent, and by them supped the rest.
 When they with drink and meat were satisfied,
 Ulysses spoke to them, intending thus
 To try the swineherd, whether kindly still
 He in the lodge would entertain and bid 305
 Him stay, or urge him to the town to go.
 'Hear me, Eumæus ! and all ye his friends !
 'At dawn I to the city wish to go
 'To beg, that thee and friends I burthen not.
 'Advise me well and a good guide supply 310
 'To lead me thither ; through it I myself
 'Will wander by necessity, if one
 'A jug of wine and meal-cake will bestow,
 'And, going to divine Ulysses' house,
 'I'll tell the wise Penelope the news,
 'And with the over-bearing suitors mix, 315
 'If feasting much they will a meal bestow.
 'I could do quickly for them what they wish ;
 'For I will tell thee, understand and hear,
 'That, thanks to Mercury the messenger
 'Who grace and fame on all men's works bestows, 320
 'No man in service could with me contend
 'To light a fire, the faggots dry to cleave,

‘To carve and roast the meat and pour out wine ;
‘Things which inferiors for nobles do.’

Eumæus ! greatly moved thou didst reply : 325

‘Ah ! stranger ! why is this thought in thy mind ?

‘Thou certainly must wish to perish there,

‘If thou wilt mingle with the suitors’ band,

‘Whose pride and force reach to the iron sky.

‘Not such attendants are for them as thou, 330

‘But youths in vests and tunics finely clad,

‘Sleek always in their heads and faces fair,

‘Who serve them, while the tables polished well

‘Are heavy laden with bread, flesh and wine.

‘Stay here, for none are by thy presence vexed, 335

‘Nor I nor any one of these my friends :

‘But when Ulysses’ dear son shall arrive,

‘Garments, a cloak and tunic, he will give,

‘And send thee where thy heart and mind desire.’ 340

Patient Ulysses answered him and said : 340

‘Eumæus ! would that thou by father Jove

‘Wert loved as much as thou art loved by me,

‘Since from my wand’ring and my grievous toil

‘Thou giv’st me respite ; for to mortal man

‘There is no evil worse than vagrancy ;

‘And for their craving stomachs men have woes,

‘On whom come wandering and fate and grief. 345

‘Since for Telemachus thou bidst me wait,

‘Tell me about the mother and the sire

‘Of the divine Ulysses, whom he left,

‘Departing, on the threshold of old age,

‘If still beneath the sun’s rays they survive,

‘Or now are dead and are in Pluto’s house.’ 350

The swineherd, chief of men, addressed him thus :
 ‘ Then, stranger ! I will speak with perfect truth :
 ‘ Laertes still is living, and to Jove
 ‘ Is ever making pray’r that from his limbs
 ‘ His life may perish in his own abode ;
 ‘ For he grieves deeply for his absent son, 355
 ‘ And for his prudent virgin-wedded wife,
 ‘ Who grieved him, when she died, exceedingly,
 ‘ And placed him in a premature old age.
 ‘ For she, through sorrow for her noble son,
 ‘ Died by a grievous death : may none so die
 ‘ Who lives my friend here and does friendly deeds ! 360
 ‘ While yet she lived, howe’er by grief opprest,
 ‘ ’Twas my delight to seek her and converse ;
 ‘ For she herself, with long-robed Ctimēnē,
 ‘ Her noble daughter, whom her youngest child
 ‘ She bare, had nurtured me, and I with her
 ‘ Grew up, and little less she honoured me. 365
 ‘ Her, when to wished for youth we both had come,
 ‘ They sent to Samos, and large gifts received.
 ‘ Me, having with a cloak and tunic clothed,
 ‘ Fair vests, and given sandals to my feet,
 ‘ She to the country sent, but loved me more. 370
 ‘ These now I lack ; but yet the blessed Gods
 ‘ Increased the toil at which I now abide :
 ‘ I still eat, drink, and give to worthy men.
 ‘ But from my mistress ’tis not mine to hear
 ‘ Or soothing word or deed, since on the house 375
 ‘ Evil has fallen, overbearing men.
 ‘ But to their mistress much the servants long
 ‘ To speak, and ask her ev’ry thing, to eat

‘ And drink, and carry something to the field,
 ‘ As much it pleases servants’ minds to do.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said : 380

‘ Swineherd Eumæus ! but how didst thou stray,
 ‘ When little still, from parents and from home ?

‘ But come now tell me this and tell me true :

‘ Was the wide-streeted city sacked, wherein

‘ Thy sire and venerable mother dwelt ? 385

‘ Or in their ships did foemen bear thee off,

‘ With sheep or oxen left alone, and bring

‘ To this man’s house, and did he fit price give ?’

The swineherd, chief of men, to him replied :

‘ Stranger ! since thou dost ask me and enquire, 390

‘ Attend in silence and enjoy thyself,

‘ And sit and drink the wine ; these nights are long :

‘ There is a time to sleep ; there is a time

‘ To listen with delight ; it is not fit

‘ That thou shouldst go to rest before the time ;

‘ For too much sleep is painful : of the rest

‘ Let him whose heart and mind command retire 395

‘ To sleep, and let him, with appearing dawn,

‘ Feast and attend upon our master’s swine.

‘ But in the lodge let us two eat and drink,

‘ And please ourselves by calling to our mind

‘ Each other’s woes ; for afterwards a man 400

‘ Is e’en with woes delighted, who has felt

‘ Great suffering and who has wandered much.

‘ What thou enquirest of me I will tell.

‘ There is a certain isle, if thou perchance

‘ Hast heard of it, called Syria, beyond

‘ Ortygia, where the sun turns round his course ;

- ‘Not very populous but excellent, 405
‘For oxen and for sheep well suited, rich
‘In wine and wheat, and famine never comes
‘Upon its people, nor does fell disease,
‘As upon other miserable men :
‘But in the city, when men’s tribes grow old,
‘Silver-bowed Phæbus with Diana comes, 410
‘And, with mild darts attacking them, destroys.
‘There are two cities ; all things are to them
‘Divided two-fold, but o’er both my sire
‘Was king ; one equal to th’ immortal Gods,
‘Called Ctesius, the son of Ormenus.
‘The ship-renowned Phœnicians thither came, 415
‘Knives, bringing many trinkets in their ship.
‘There was a woman of Phœnicia
‘In my sire’s house, fair, skilled in beauteous works ;
‘Her the Phœnicians, crafty men, deceived ;
‘One spoke to her of love, as near the ship 420
‘She washed the vests ; a thing which captivates
‘Weak women’s minds, though prudent one may be.)
‘He asked her who she was, and whence she came ;
‘She told him of her father’s high-roofed house :
‘“ From Sidon, rich in brass, I boast to be, 425
‘“ Daughter of wealth-o’erflowing Arybas :
‘“ The Taphians seized upon me, plunderers,
‘“ As from the fields I came, and hither brought
‘“ To this man’s house, and he a fit price gave.” 430
‘Then spake to her the man who gained her love :
‘“ Wouldst thou go back now to thine home with us,
‘“ Father’s and mother’s house and them to see,
‘“ For still they live and are accounted rich ? ”

‘The woman then replied to him and said :

‘“This might be so if, sailors ! ye consent 435

‘“To swear an oath to take me safely home.”

‘She spake : and all as she commanded swore :

‘When they had sworn and made the oath complete,

‘The woman spoke again and answered thus :

‘“Be silent now : let no one of your friends 440

‘“Address me when he meets me in the street

‘“Or at the fountain, lest one go and tell

‘“Th’ old man, and he suspecting me should bind

‘“With grievous bonds, and ruin plan for you.

‘“Keep your own counsel ; quickly buy your stores,

‘“And, when your ship is of provisions full, 445

‘“Swift be your message to the house to me.

‘“Gold I will bring, whatever comes to hand.

‘“There is besides what I would willingly

‘“As a repayment for my passage give :

‘“For in the house I nurse the good man’s son, 450

‘“A clever child, who runs with me abroad :

‘“Him to the ship I’ll bring, and he would gain

‘“A large price when to foreign men ye go.”

‘Thus having said she to the fair house went.

‘For a whole year, remaining there with us,

‘They gained by trade much substance in the ship.

‘They, when the ship was loaded for return, 455

‘To tell the woman sent a messenger

‘To my sire’s house. A crafty-minded man

‘A golden necklace set with amber brought ; 460

‘The maidens and my mother in the house

‘Handled and gazed upon it with their eyes,

‘Off’ring a price. He silent signed to her,

‘ And then departed to the hollow ship.
‘ Taking my hand she led me out of doors : 465
‘ The cups and tables in the porch she found
‘ Of those who feasted, waiting on my sire,
‘ Who at the assembly and the council were.
‘ She quickly hid three goblets in her breast
‘ And bore them off : I followed thoughtlessly. 470
‘ The sun had set and all the ways were dark :
‘ We to the far-famed harbour quickly went,
‘ Where the Phœnician sailors’ swift ship lay.
‘ Embarking o’er the wat’ry ways they sailed
‘ With us on board : Jove sent a fav’ring breeze. 475
‘ Six days we sailed along by night and day ;
‘ When Jove, the son of Saturn, sent the sev’nth,
‘ Diana, th’ archeress, the woman struck ;
‘ In the ship’s hold she sounded as she fell
‘ Like to a sea-gull, and they threw her out,
‘ Of seals and fishes to become the prey. 480
‘ I grieving in my heart was left, and them
‘ The wind and water brought to Ithaca.
‘ There with his wealth Laertes purchased me,
‘ And thus I with my eyes this land beheld.’

Noble Ulysses thus to him replied : 485
‘ Eumæus ! much thou hast my mind aroused,
‘ Reciting all the sorrows thou hast borne.
‘ But Jove has placed beside thee good and ill,
‘ Since after many labours thou hast come
‘ To a kind master’s house, who carefully
‘ Gives food and drink ; and thou a good life liv’st, 490
‘ While I o’er many towns come wandering.’

They thus with one another converse held ;

Nor for long time, but very brief they slept,
For the fair-haired Aurora quickly came.

But the companions of Telemachus 495

Upon the shore unloosed the sails, the mast
Took down, and urged the ship into the port
With oars, let go the anchors, bound the ropes

Upon the sea-beach, disembarked themselves,
Prepared a meal, and mixed the sparkling wine. 500

When they were satisfied with food and drink,
Prudent Telemachus a speech began :

‘Ye to the city now the black ship row ;

‘The fields and herdsmen I will go to see,

‘And in the ev’ning, having seen the fields, 505

‘Will to the city go, and in the morn

‘Will for your voyage give you recompense,

‘A banquet good of flesh and pleasant wine.’

Him Godlike Theoclymenus addressed :

‘Where shall I go, dear son ! to what man’s house

‘Of those who rule o’er rocky Ithaca, 510

‘Or straightway to thy mother’s and thine own ?’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

‘To our own house at any other time

‘I’d bid thee go ; of hospitality

‘No lack is there ; but ’twould be worse for thee,

‘For I shall not be there myself, nor will 515

‘My mother see thee : rarely in the house

‘She to the suitors shows herself ; apart

‘She in an upper chamber weaves a web.

‘But I will tell thee of another man

‘To whom thou mayst go, to Eurymachus,

‘The noble son of prudent Polybus,

‘Whom as a God the Ithacans regard. 520
 ‘He is far best, and much desires to wed
 ‘My mother and obtain Ulysses’ rank.
 ‘Olympian Jove who dwells in air knows this,
 ‘If ere they wed their evil day will come.’

A bird as thus he spake flew to the right, 525
 A hawk, Apollo’s rapid messenger,
 And holding in his talons tore a dove,
 And shed its feathers on the ground, midway
 Between the vessel and Telemachus.

From his companions Theoclymenus
 Called him apart, and grasped his hand and said : 530
 ‘Not without God, Telemachus ! this bird
 ‘Has on thy right hand flown ; I recognized
 ‘The omen when I saw it fronting us :
 ‘There is no race more royal than is yours,
 ‘In Ithaca ye always are supreme.’

Prudent Telemachus to him replied : 535
 ‘Would, stranger ! that thy word might be fulfilled !
 ‘Soon shouldst thou know my friendship, and have gifts
 ‘So num’rous that who met would give thee joy.’

He then Peiræus his true friend addressed :
 ‘Peiræus ! son of Clytius ! thou art 540
 ‘The one who heeds me most of all my friends
 ‘Who went with me to Pylos ; to thine house
 ‘Convey this stranger, treat him carefully,
 ‘And honour him till I myself shall come.’

The spear-renowned Peiræus answered him :
 ‘Telemachus ! however long the time 545
 ‘That thou mayst stay, I will take care of him,
 ‘Nor lack shall be of hospitality.’

He spake, and went on board the ship, and bade
His friends embark and loose the mooring ropes :
They quick embarked, and on the benches sate.

\ Telemachus bound sandals on his feet, 550
Took a strong jav'lin tipped with sharpened brass
From the ship's deck, and they the cables loosed,
Pushed off and to the city sailed, as bade
Telemachus, divine Ulysses' son.
His feet conveyed him swiftly on the way,
Till to the lodge he came, wherein there were 555
Un-numbered swine, and where the swineherd, good
\ And caring kindly for his masters, slept.

BOOK XVI. ✓

Ulysses and the swineherd, in the lodge
Lighting a fire, prepared their meal at dawn,
And sent the men out with the herded swine.
The dogs fawned whining on Telemachus,
Nor barked at his approach. Ulysses saw 5
The fawning dogs, the sound of feet came near :
He to Eumæus spoke these wingèd words :
'Eumæus ! sure 'tis some one of thy friends,
'Or some one known to thee that comes : the dogs
'Bark not but fawn ; I hear the sound of feet.' 10

The word was scarcely said when in the porch
His dear son stood : th' astonished swineherd rushed,
And from his hands the vessels fell, wherewith
He was employed in mixing the dark wine.
He went to meet his master, kissed his head,

Both his fair eyes and both his hands, and wept. 15
 As when a loving father clasps his son
 Who in the tenth year from a strange land comes,
 His only one, the son of his old age,
 For whom he much has grieved ; the swineherd so,
 Clinging to the divine Telemachus, 20
 Kissed him all over, as from death escaped,
 And weeping spoke to him these wingèd words :
 ‘ Telemachus ! my sweet light ! art thou come ?
 ‘ I never thought that I should see thee more
 ‘ When in the ship to Pylos thou didst go.
 ‘ But enter now, dear child ! that I may joy 25
 ‘ To see thee in my house arrived from far.
 ‘ Not to the fields or herdsmen oft thou com’st,
 ‘ But dwellest in the town ; for ’tis thy will
 ‘ To look upon the suitors’ wasteful band.’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said : 30
 ‘ Friend ! it shall be so ; for thy sake I come
 ‘ To see thee with mine eyes and hear thy news,
 ‘ If yet my mother in the house remains,
 ‘ Or if some other man has married her,
 ‘ And so Ulysses’ house, of furniture
 ‘ Bereft, is by foul cobwebs occupied.’ 35

To him the swineherd, chief of men, replied :
 ‘ She surely in the palace still abides ;
 ‘ With suff’ring mind her mournful nights and days
 ‘ Are ever wasting, while she pours forth tears.’

He spoke, and took from him his brazen spear : 40
 He ent’ring o’er the stony threshold passed.
 On his approach Ulysses from his seat
 Retired : Telemachus refusing said :

‘Sit, stranger ! elsewhere in our lodge we’ll find

‘A seat ; here is one who will give it me.’

45

Thus speaking he sate down ; the swineherd spread
Green twigs below and put a fleece above,

And there the dear son of Ulysses sate.

Dishes of roasted meat the swineherd placed

Beside them, which they left the day before, *frugally*

50

And piled up bread in baskets hastily,

And mingled sweet wine in an ivy cup.

Fronting divine Ulysses he sate down,

And on the food prepared their hands they threw.

When they were satisfied with drink and food,

55

Thus to the swineherd spoke Telemachus :

‘My friend ! from what land has this stranger come ?

‘Did sailors him to Ithaca convey ?

‘Who do they boast to be ? for not, I think,

‘Could he at all have hither come by land.’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply :

60

‘My son ! then I will tell thee all the truth :

‘From the wide Crete he boasts his race to be,

‘And says that he has gone a wanderer

‘To many cities ; God has destined this ;

‘But now, escaped from a Thesprotian ship,

65

‘He to my lodge has come ; to thee in charge

‘I give him : treat him as thou wilt, for he

‘Declares himself to be thy suppliant.’

Prudent Telemachus to him replied :

‘Eumæus ! thou hast said a grievous word :

‘How shall I lodge the stranger in my house ?

70

‘I am but young, nor yet can trust my hands

‘To ward off one who is enraged with me.

' My mother's mind is doubtful in her breast,
 ' Whether to stay with me and guard the house,
 ' Her husband's couch respecting and her fame, 75
 ' Or now accompany whoever best
 ' Among the suitors woos and gives most gifts.
 ' This stranger, since he to thine house has come,
 ' I will in garments fair, a vest and cloak,
 ' Array : a two-edged sword, and for his feet 80
 ' Will sandals give, and send him where he wills.
 ' Thou, if thou wilt, retaining in the lodge
 ' Take care of him ; the garments I will send,
 ' And all his food to eat, that so no loss
 ' To thee and thy companions he may cause.
 ' But that he thither to the suitors go 85
 ' I cannot suffer ; they have haughty pride ;
 ' Lest they revile him and there be grief to me.
 ' 'Tis hard for one, though brave he be, to act
 ' Against a number, for much stronger they.'
 To him long-suffering Ulysses said : 90
 ' Since it is right, my friend ! that I reply ;—
 ' Ye vex my heart when of the shameful deeds
 ' I hear, which in the house the suitors plan,
 ' Ye say, against the will of one like thee ;—
 ' Tell me if willingly thou dost submit, 95
 ' Or if the people, following the voice
 ' Of God, are publicly thine enemies ;
 ' Or dost thou blame thy brothers, whom a man,
 ' Whene'er a great strife rises, trusts in fight ?
 ' Would I had youth to aid me in this thought,
 ' Or were the excellent Ulysses' son, 100
 ' Or that himself came wandering, (for still

‘ There’s chance of hope) then might some other man
‘ Cut off my head if I did not become
‘ A mischief to them in Ulysses’ house !
‘ If by their numbers they should conquer me 105
‘ Standing alone, I would prefer to die
‘ In my own palace slaughtered than to see
‘ Incessantly these unbecoming deeds,
‘ Strangers insulted, men indecently
‘ Dragging the female servants through the house,
‘ The wine continuously drawn, and them 110
‘ Devouring food cost-free and recklessly,
‘ With object which will never be fulfilled.’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

‘ Then, stranger ! I will tell thee all the truth ;
‘ Neither the people are mine enemies,
‘ Nor do I blame my brothers, whom a man, 115
‘ Whene’er a great strife rises trusts in fight.
‘ For thus has Jove but single made our race :
‘ Arcesias begat an only son,
‘ Laertes ; he Ulysses, him alone,
‘ Begat ; again Ulysses only me,
‘ And in his house he left me nor enjoyed. 120
‘ Unnumbered foes are therefore in his house ;
‘ As many chiefs as o’er the island rule,
‘ Dulichium and Samos filled with wood,
‘ Zacynthus, and who rule rough Ithaca,
‘ So many woo my mother, waste our house. 125
‘ The hateful marriage neither she repels
‘ Nor can conclude it ; but they waste and eat
‘ My substance, and will soon myself destroy.
‘ But all these things are in the Gods’ lap laid.

' Dear friend ! go quick and tell Penelope 130
 ' That I am safe and have from Pylos come.
 ' I will stay here ; when thou hast told the news
 ' To her alone, do thou again return ;
 ' Let no one of the other Grecians hear,
 ' For many are against me plotting ill.'

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply : 135
 ' I know ; I see ; thou speak'st to one who thinks.
 ' But come now tell me this and tell me true,
 ' Shall I this same way to Laertes go,
 ' Ill-fated man, a messenger ? he once,
 ' Much for Ulysses grieving, overlooked 140
 ' The works, and with the servants in the house
 ' Did eat and drink, as in his breast his mind
 ' Commanded ; but since thou to Pylos went'st
 ' They say he eats and drinks not, nor o'erlooks
 ' The works, but grieving sits with groans and sobs,
 ' And that his flesh is wasting round his bones.' 145

Prudent Telemachus to him replied :
 ' 'Tis sad ; but we will leave him though he grieves.
 ' If all things by their own choice were to men,
 ' I first would choose my sire's returning day.
 ' But thou, when thou hast told thy news, return, 150
 ' Nor wander in the country after him,
 ' But bid my mother urge her handmaiden,
 ' The house-keeper, to go by stealth with speed ;
 ' She may the message to the old man take.'

He spake and urged the swineherd ; in his hand
 He took his sandals, braced them on his feet,
 And to the town went. Going from the lodge 155
 Eumæus was not from Minerva hid,

But she came near and in her form was like
A fair large woman, skilled in beauteous works,
And in the porch stood, by Ulysses seen ;
Telemachus nor saw her nor perceived, 160
For the Gods are not clearly shewn to all.
Ulysses saw her and the dogs ; but they
Barked not, but with a whimper fled apart.
She with her brows made sign : Ulysses saw,
And from the house outside the great wall came 165
And fronted her ; and thus Minerva spake :
' Ulysses wise ! Laertes' noble son !
' Tell now thy son thy purpose nor conceal,
' That, plotting for the suitors' death and fate,
' To the famed city ye may go, and I 170
' Eager to fight not long will absent be.'

She spake, and touched him with a golden rod ;
A well-washed cloak and tunic first she placed
About his breast, improved his form and youth ;
Again his flesh grew swart, his cheeks filled out, 175
And a dark beard sprang up about his chin.
So did she and retreated ; to the lodge
Ulysses went while his dear son admired,
And turned his eyes on either side, alarmed
Lest 'twere some God, and spoke these wingèd words :
' Stranger ! thou seemest other than thou wert ; 180
' Thou wearest other vests ; unlike thy flesh ;
' Sure thou 'rt some God of those in heav'n who dwell.
' But be propitious to us, that to thee
' We may give grateful offerings, and gifts
' Made of wrought gold ; forbear to do us harm.' 185
Long-suffering Ulysses answered him :

'No God am I ; why dost thou liken me
 'To the immortals? I thy father am,
 'For whom thou groaning bearest many griefs,
 'Submitting to the violence of men.'

He spake, and kissed his son, and down his cheeks
 Let fall the tear which he restrained before.

Telemachus, for he did not believe
 That 'twas his father, thus forthwith replied :

'Not thou Ulysses art, my father ; but a God
 'Deludes me, that I more may grieve and groan. 190
 'No mortal could himself such things contrive
 'Of his own mind, unless a God should come,
 'And wish to make with ease one young or old.
 'For thou wert lately old and meanly clad ;
 'Now like the Gods who in the wide sky dwell.' 200

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :
 'Telemachus ! it is not right that thou
 'Shouldst wonder over much, and marvel at
 'Thine own dear father now within the house.
 'There will no different Ulysses come ;
 'But here am I that man, who suffered woes 205
 'And wandered much, and in the twentieth year
 'I have arrived at my paternal land.

'This is Minerva's work, who made me such
 'As she would have me, for she has the power ;
 'At one time like a beggar, then again
 'Like to a youth with fair vests on his flesh. 210
 ('Tis easy for the Gods in heav'n who dwell)
 'To glorify a mortal and debase.'

So speaking he sate down ; Telemachus
 Clung to his noble sire and wailed and wept.

To both of them came mourning ; and they wept 215
Loudly and more incessantly than birds,
Ospreys, or crook-clawed vultures, whose young brood
The countrymen have snatched, ere fledged, away ;
So from their eyes the piteous tear they dropped ;
And while they wept the sun's light would have set,
Had not Telemachus his sire addressed : 220

‘ Dear father ! in what ship to Ithaca
‘ Did sailors bring thee ? who boast they to be ?
‘ For, as I think, thou didst not come by land.’

Long-suffering Ulysses answered him : 225

‘ My son ! I will then tell thee all the truth :

‘ The ship-renowned Phæacians brought me, men

‘ Who convoy all whoever to them comes.

‘ They in a swift ship brought me o’er the sea

‘ Asleep, and set me down in Ithaca. 230

‘ They gave me splendid presents, brass and gold,

‘ And woven vests abundantly, and these

‘ By the Gods’ instigation lie in caves.

‘ I by Minerva’s counsels hither came,

‘ That for our enemies we death may plan.

‘ Come ! count the suitors up that I may know 235

‘ How many of them and what men they are ;

‘ And taking thought I will deliberate

‘ If we two without others can alone

‘ Resist them, or for other men must seek.’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said : 240

‘ Father ! I always heard of thy great fame,

‘ In hands a warrior, and in counsel wise.

‘ Too great the deed thou speakest of, and awe

‘ Possesses me ; ’twould not be possible

‘That two with many strong men should contend.
‘Not ten nor twice ten men the suitors are, 245
‘But many more; their number thou shalt know.
‘Fifty-two chosen youths (six serving men
‘Attend upon them) from Dulichium;
‘From Samos there are four-and-twenty men,
‘And from Zacynthus twenty Grecian youths; 250
‘Twelve are from Ithaca itself, all chiefs.
‘Medon, a herald and a bard divine,
‘Is with them, and two servants skilled to carve.
‘If we should meet with all of them within,
‘To thine own bitterness and woe, I fear, 255
‘Thou wouldst take vengeance on their violence.
‘Bethink thee then if thou canst fix upon
‘Some one with willing mind to aid us two.’

To him long-suffering Ulysses said :

‘Then I will tell thee ; understand and hear.
‘Think if Minerva, joined with father Jove, 260
‘Suffice, or other helper I shall seek.’

Prudent Telemachus in turn replied :

‘Good helpers are the two thou speakest of,
‘Though sitting in the clouds aloft, who rule
‘O’er other men and the immortal Gods !’ 265

To him long-suffering Ulysses said :

‘These from the fierce fight will not distant be
‘Long time, when in my house the strength of Mars
‘Is tried between the suitors and ourselves.
‘But go thou home with the appearing morn, 270
‘And with the faithless suitors converse hold :
‘Me afterwards the swineherd to the town,
‘Like a mean aged beggar, shall conduct.

- ‘ If in the house they shall dishonour me,
‘ When I am outraged let thine heart endure. 275
‘ If through the house they drag me by the feet,
‘ Or strike with blows, look on and still forbear ;
‘ Still bid them from their foolishness to cease,
‘ With mild words soothing them ; but they will not
‘ Obey thee, for their fatal day stands near. 280
‘ Another thing I tell thee, weigh it well :
‘ When the much-counselling Minerva prompts
‘ My mind, I will make signal with my head ;
‘ Marking it, take whatever warlike arms
‘ Lie in the house to the high room’s recess, 285
‘ And place all there, but with mild words beguile
‘ The suitors, when they miss them and enquire :
‘ “ Out of the smoke I place them, for no more
‘ “ Are they like those which when he went to Troy
‘ “ Ulysses left behind ; they have been soiled 290
‘ “ Where the fire’s vapour reached them ; and besides
‘ “ The son of Saturn has this greater thing
‘ “ Placed in my mind, lest ye, o’ercome by wine,
‘ “ Should raise a quarrel and each other wound,
‘ “ And on the feast and wooing bring disgrace ;
‘ “ For of itself the steel excites a man.”
‘ Leave for us two alone, two swords, two spears, 295
‘ Two shields of bull’s hide in our hands to take,
‘ That we may rush and seize them ; afterwards
‘ Pallas and Jove will make them cowardly.
‘ Another thing I tell thee, weigh it well :
‘ If truly thou art mine and of our blood, 300
‘ Let none hear that Ulysses is within,
‘ Nor let Laertes nor the swineherd know,

'No servant, not Penelope herself ;
 'But thou and I alone will ascertain
 'The women's tendency, and try besides
 'The men-servants, who honours us and fears, 305
 'Who scorns us and dishonours one like thee.'

His noble son addressed him in reply :

'Father ! I think hereafter thou wilt know
 'My mind, for no mean spirit keeps me back. 310
 'Thy plan will not, I think, of service be
 'To you or me ; I urge thee to reflect.
 'Thou wilt be long in trying ev'ry man,
 'And going o'er the lands, while in the house
 'They undisturbed by force thy goods consume, 315
 'Nor is there sparing ; but I recommend
 'That of the women thou distinction make,
 'Who thee dishonour and who guiltless are.
 'I would not try the men at their abodes,
 'But manage these things afterwards, if thou
 'Some true sign know'st from ægis-bearing Jove. 320

advice

'Twas thus with one another they conversed.

Meanwhile at Ithaca the well-built ship,
 Which bore Telemachus and all his friends
 From Pylos, touched ; they, when they came within
 The deep port, drew the black ship on the land, 325
 And the brave crew the tackling bore away.
 They quickly to house of Clytius
 Carried the beauteous gifts, and forward sent
 A herald to Ulysses' house, to tell
 The tidings to the wise Penelope,
 How that Telemachus had reached the land, 330
 And to the city bade the ship to sail,

Lest the illustrious queen alarmed should shed
A tender tear. The two together met,
The herald and the noble swineherd, each
With the same message charged to tell the queen.
When to the palace of the godlike king 335
They came, the herald mid the handmaids said :
' O queen ! thy dear son has but now arrived.'

The swineherd, standing near Penelope,
Told all her dear son bade him tell, and, when
He had told all the message, to the swine 340
He went and left the court-yards and the house.
The suitors grieved and were dispirited :
They from the house beside the courts' great wall
Came, and before the portals took their seats.
Eurymachus, of Polybus the son,
Began to speak : ' My friends a mighty deed, 345
' This voyage, has been by Telemachus
' Done proudly, though we said it would not be.
' Come, let us launch the black ship which is best,
' And get together mariners to row,
' Who may those men bid home to come with speed.'

All was not said before Amphinomus, 350
As from his place he turned, beheld the ship
In the deep port, the sailors furling sails,
And holding in their hands the oars. He laughed,
And thus he pleasantly addressed his friends :
' No message let us send ; the men are here : 355
' Either some God has told them, or themselves
' Have seen but could not reach the passing ship.'

He spake : they rising to the sea-shore went,
And swiftly drew the black ship to the land,

While the brave crew the tackling bore away. 360
They to th' assembly in a body went,
Nor suffered young or old to sit with them.
Antinous, Eupeithes' son, thus spoke :
' O how the Gods have freed this man from harm !
' The spies have sat upon the windy heights 365
' For days successively ; we never slept
' When the sun set at night upon the land,
' But sailing in the swift ship out at sea
' Watched till the morning for Telemachus,
' Lying in wait to take him and destroy ; 370
' The Deity meanwhile has brought him home ;
' But let us for Telemachus devise
' Destruction. May he not escape ! I think
' That while he lives our deeds will not be done,
' For he is skilled in counsel and in thought,
' Nor do the people favour us at all. 375
' Come ! ere to council he collects the Greeks,
' (He will not, as I think, desist, but will
' Be wroth, and rising up will tell them all,
' That we his death planned but did not succeed ;
' They hearing evil deeds will not approve ;) 380
' Lest they assail and drive us from our land,
' And to another people we should go.
' Let us be first and kill him in the field
' Or on the road, far distant from the town :
' Then let us seize his goods and portion them 385
' Among ourselves, and to his mother give,
' And to whoever marries her, his house.
' If my words please you not, but if you wish
' That he should live and have his father's goods,

‘ From henceforth let us not assembled here
‘ Consume his mind-delighting goods, but each 390
‘ From his own palace, courting her with gifts,
‘ Woo her, and let her after marry him
‘ Who gives most gifts and comes designed by fate.’

He spake : they all in perfect silence sate.
Them next Amphinomus harangued, the son
Of Nisus, son of King Aretias, 395

Who led the suitors from Dulichium,
Fertile in wheat and grass, who by his words
Most pleased Penelope, for wise was he.
He wishing well to them harangued and said :
‘ My friends ! I would not kill Telemachus : 400
‘ ’Tis dreadful to kill one of royal race.

‘ First let us ask the counsel of the Gods ;
‘ If great Jove’s oracles advise it, I
‘ Myself will kill him and exhort the rest ;
‘ But if the Gods dissent I bid you cease.’ 405

Thus spake Amphinomus ; his speech pleased well.
Then rising, to Ulysses’ house they went,
And when they came sate down on polished thrones.
Prudent Penelope had other thoughts,

Before the haughty suitors to appear, 410

For of her son’s death in the house she heard :
Medon the herald, who o’erheard their plans,
Had told her : she, attended by her maids,
Went to the palace. When the noble dame
Had to the suitors’ presence come, she stood
Beside a column of the well-made roof, 415

Holding a fine wrought veil before her face,
Chided and thus addressed Antinous :

‘ Antinous ! thou man of violence
‘ And wicked plans ! and yet they say that thou
‘ In counsel and in speech art eminent
‘ Among those of like age in Ithaca ; 420
‘ But not such truly art thou. Madman ! why
‘ Plot death and fate against Telemachus,
‘ Nor pay regard to suppliants, of whom
‘ Jove is protector ? ’tis no holy rule
‘ Against each other evil deeds to plan.
‘ Know’st thou not how thy father hither came
‘ A fugitive, and feared the people’s wrath ? 425
‘ For they were much enraged, since he had done,
‘ In the pursuit of Taphian pirates, wrong
‘ To the Thesprotians who were friends of ours.
‘ They would have killed him, torn out his dear heart,
‘ And of his great fair substance made a prey :
‘ Ulysses hindered them and kept them off 430
‘ Though eager. Now his house thou dost consume
‘ Dishonourably, and dost woo his wife,
‘ And slay his son and cause great grief to me :
‘ I bid thee cease thyself and others urge.’

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,
To her replied : ‘ O wise Penelope ! 435
‘ The daughter of Icarius ! take heart ;
‘ Let not these things be to thy mind a care :
‘ There is not, nor will ever be, the man
‘ Who on thy son Telemachus will lay
‘ His hands, while I still live and see the light.
‘ For thus I say and it shall be performed : 440
‘ His black blood soon shall flow around our spear.
‘ For brave Ulysses, often placing me

‘ Upon his knees, put roast flesh in my hands,
 ‘ And red wine gave me : so Telemachus 445
 ‘ Is of all men most dear to me, and death
 ‘ I would not have him from the suitors fear,
 ‘ But from the Gods there can be no escape.’

He spoke to cheer her, but her son’s death planned.
 She, mounting to the shining upper rooms,
 Mourned her dear spouse Ulysses, till sweet sleep 450
 Blue-eyed Minerva on her eyelids shed.

The swineherd to Ulysses and his son
 At ev’ning came ; their meal they skilfully
 Made ready, having slain a yearling swine.
 Minerva, standing by Laertes’ son 455
 Ulysses, touched him with her rod : again
 Made him an old man, sordid garments put
 About his flesh, lest when the swineherd saw
 He should discover him, and go to tell
 Prudent Penelope, nor keep it back.

Telemachus then first addressed him thus : 460
 ‘ Eumæus ! thou art come ; say what report
 ‘ Is in the city ? are the suitors there
 ‘ From ambush, or still wait they my return ?’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply :
 ‘ No care was mine these things to seek or ask 465
 ‘ In passing through the town ; ’twas my desire,
 ‘ Quick, having told my message, to return.
 ‘ But from thy friends a rapid messenger,
 ‘ A herald, met me, who was first to tell
 ‘ The tidings to thy mother. This besides
 ‘ I know, for I beheld it with my eyes : 470
 ‘ Above the town, where is th’ Hermæan mound,

‘As I was going, I a swift ship saw
 ‘Ent’ring our port : therein were many men,
 ‘And it was filled with shields and two-edged swords :
 ‘I think ’twas they, but yet I do not know.’ 475

He spake : Telemachus glanced at his sire,
 And smiled, but shunned to let the swineherd see.
 When from their toil they ceased and had prepared
 The meal, they feasted, nor their mind did lack
 The equally divided banquet. When
 Their wish for food and drink they satisfied, 480
 They thought of bed and took the gift of sleep.

BOOK XVII.

WHEN early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
 Telemachus, divine Ulysses’ son,
 His beauteous sandals braced beneath his feet,
 Took the strong spear which fitted well his hands,
 Bound for the town, and to his swineherd said : 5
 ‘Old friend ! I now am going to the town
 ‘To let my mother see me ; for I think
 ‘She will not cease from groans and tearful grief
 ‘Before she sees me ; but I charge thee thus :
 ‘Lead the unhappy stranger to the town, 10
 ‘That he may beg for food there : whoso wills,
 ‘A meal-cake and a cup of wine may give.
 ‘It is not possible that I should all

‘Maintain, who suffer sorrows in my mind.
 ‘Wroth if the stranger be, ’twill for himself
 ‘Be sadder, for I love to speak the truth.’

15

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :
 ‘My friend ! I have no wish to be detained ;
 ‘’Tis for a beggar better in the town
 ‘Than in the fields to go and beg his food.
 ‘Who wills will give ; I am not of such age
 ‘As at the stalls to linger and obey
 ‘A master, who in all things gives command.
 ‘But come ! this man will lead me where thou bidd’st,
 ‘When I am warmed with fire, and sunshine comes,
 ‘[For mean these garments which I sadly wear] :
 ‘Lest morning’s early frost upon me fall ;
 ‘For, as ye say, far distant is the town.’

20

25

He spake : Telemachus went through the lodge
 With speed, and for the suitors brooded woes.
 But when he to the well-built house had come,
 On a high column he upreared his spear,
 Entered, and o’er the marble threshold passed.
 Euryclea, the nurse, espied him first,
 As on the painted thrones she fleeces spread,
 And weeping went to meet him ; crowding round
 The other handmaids of Ulysses came,
 And, clasping him, his head and shoulders kissed.
 Forth from her chamber wise Penelope,
 Like golden Venus or Diana, came,
 And weeping round her dear son threw her arms ;
 His head she kissed and both his beauteous eyes,
 And weeping spake to him these wingèd words :
 ‘Telemachus ! my sweet light ! thou art come.

30

35

40

Mallard

‘ I never thought to see thee any more,
 ‘ When in the ship to Pylos, secretly
 ‘ Against my will, thou wentest to hear news
 ‘ Of thy dear sire ; come tell what thou hast seen.’

Prudent Telemachus in turn replied : 45

‘ My mother ! cause not grief to me, nor rouse
 ‘ My heart, who have from dreadful death escaped.
 ‘ But bathe thyself and put fresh garments on ;
 ‘ Go to thine upper chamber with thy maids,
 ‘ To all the Gods vow perfect hecatombs, 50
 ‘ If Jove will deeds of vengeance execute.
 ‘ But to the forum I will go to call
 ‘ A stranger who attended me from thence.
 ‘ As I came hither him I forward sent
 ‘ With my brave comrades, and Piræus bade 55
 ‘ To take him to his house and entertain,
 ‘ And honour heartily, till I should come.’

He spake and not unheeded flew his word.
 She bathed herself and put fresh garments on,
 To all the Gods vowed perfect hecatombs,
 If Jove would deeds of vengeance execute. 60
 Then from the house went forth Telemachus,
 Holding his spear ; the swift dogs followed him.
 Minerva on him poured a grace divine,
 And all the people as he went admired.
 The haughty suitors round him thickly came, 65
 And speaking fair planned evil in their mind.
 Of these he shunned the gathered crowd, but where
 Sate Mentor, Alitherses, Antiphus,
 Who from the first were his paternal friends,
 He went and sate ; they ev’ry thing enquired.

Piræus, famous for the spear, came nigh,
And through the city to the forum brought
The stranger, nor from him Telemachus
Was long apart, but came and by him stood.
Piræus then addressed him first and said :

‘Telemachus ! the women urge to go
‘Quick to my house, that I may send away
‘The gifts which Menelaus gave to thee.’

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

‘We know not how, Piræus ! things will be ;
‘If the proud suitors slay me secretly,
‘And in the house my father’s goods divide,
‘I wish that thou thyself, or one of these,
‘Should keep them and enjoy ; but if for them
‘I death and fate contrive, do thou the gifts
‘Rejoicing bring to me rejoicing home.’

He spake, and led the much-worn stranger home :
But when they to the well-built house had come,
They laid their cloaks down on the seats and thrones,
And to the polished cauldrons went and bathed.
Then when the maids had bathed and rubbed with oil,
They threw around them woollen cloaks and vests,
And coming from the baths on thrones sat down.
From a fair golden ewer a maiden filled
A bowl, above a silver cauldron placed,
To wash, and laid a polished table near.
The venerable house-keeper brought bread
And set it near them, bringing many meats
To gratify them with what food there was.
His mother near a column of the house
Sate in the front of him, and on a couch

Reclining twined her slender spindle round.
 Upon the food prepared their hands they threw.
 When they with meat and drink were satisfied,
 Prudent Penelope a speech began : 100

‘Telemachus ! I to my upper room
 ‘Will go, and on my bed, made sad for me,
 ‘Ever besprinkled with my tears, since when
 ‘Ulysses with th’ Atridæ went to Troy,
 ‘Will lay me down : thou hast not dared, before
 ‘The haughty suitors hither came, to tell 105
 ‘If of thy sire’s return thou aught hast heard.’

The wise Telemachus replied and said :
 ‘Then, mother ! I will tell thee all the truth.
 ‘To Pylos and King Nestor we repaired :
 ‘He in his lofty house receiving me 110

‘Treated with kindness, as a father might
 ‘A son when newly come from other lands ;
 ‘He with his noble sons so cared for me :
 ‘He said that not from any men on earth
 ‘He had of suffering Ulysses heard,
 ‘Either alive or dead, but sent me on 115

‘To valiant Menelaus, Atreus’ son,
 ‘With horses and a well-built chariot.
 ‘The Argive Helen there I saw, for whom
 ‘By Gods’ will Greeks and Trojans laboured much.
 ‘Then Menelaus, in the war-shout brave, 120

‘Asked for what cause to Sparta I had come,
 ‘And I recited to him all the truth :
 ‘And then he thus addressed me in reply :
 ‘“O strange it is that in a strong man’s bed
 ‘“They should, so mean themselves, desire to lie ! 125

‘ “It is as though in some fierce lion’s lair
 ‘ “A hind should leave her new-born suckling fawns
 ‘ “Asleep, while she explores the woody slopes
 ‘ “And grassy glens in search of food, and he,
 ‘ “Returning after to his den, should slay 130
 ‘ “Them both ; and thus Ulysses them will slay.
 ‘ “O father Jove ! Minerva ! Phœbus ! would
 ‘ “He such were now as in fair Lesbos once,
 ‘ “A wrestler matched with Philomeleus’ son,
 ‘ “Whom he o’erthrew, and all the Greeks rejoiced ; 135
 ‘ “Would that Ulysses such the suitors met ;
 ‘ “Their fate would swift, their marriage bitter be.
 ‘ “As to thy questions and thy pray’rs, I will
 ‘ “Nor give evasive answers nor deceive.
 ‘ “What the old prophet of the sea declared 140
 ‘ “I will not hide, nor will conceal a word.
 ‘ “He said that he had seen him, shedding tears
 ‘ “And bearing many sorrows in an isle,
 ‘ “In nymph Calypso’s house, who him by force
 ‘ “Detained, nor could he to his country go,
 ‘ “For he had neither well-oared ships nor friends 145
 ‘ “To take him o’er the broad back of the sea.”
 ‘ Thus Atreus’ son, brave Menelaus, spake.
 ‘ When this I had accomplished I returned :
 ‘ Th’immortals gave to me a fav’ring breeze,
 ‘ And quickly sent me to my native land.’

He spake, and stirred her mind within her breast.

Then Theoclymenus addressed her thus : 150

‘ O honoured Lady ! of Laertes son
 ‘ Ulysses’ wife ! he knows not clearly all ;
 ‘ But hear my words, for I will truly speak

‘In prophecy, nor will I aught conceal.
‘First of the Gods let Jove a witness be, 155
‘This hospitable table, and the hearth
‘Of famed Ulysses unto which I come,
‘That even now in his paternal land
‘Ulysses sits or walks, and makes a search
‘Into these wicked deeds and evil plans,
‘Against the suitors. In the well-benched ship 160
‘As I was sitting I such augury
‘Beheld, and told it to Telemachus.’

To him the wise Penelope replied :

‘Would, stranger ! that thy word might be fulfilled !
‘Soon shouldst thou know my friendship, and have
gifts

‘So num’rous that who met would give thee joy.’ 165

As they with one another thus conversed,

The suitors meanwhile in Ulysses’ hall

In hurling quoits and jav’lins took delight

On the smooth pavement, haughty as before.

When it was supper-time, and from the field 170

The sheep and men who used to lead them came,

Medon, who of the heralds pleased them most

And waited at their feast, addressed them thus :

‘Youths ! now that all have with the games been
pleased,

‘Come to the house that we may make a feast ; 175

‘’Tis no bad thing at fitting time to sup.’

He spake : they rising up his word obeyed.

But when they to the well-built house had come,

They laid their cloaks upon the seats and thrones,

And sacrificed large sheep and well-fed goats, 180

Fat swine, and slaughtered from the herd a cow,
The feast preparing. Town-ward from the field
Ulysses and the swineherd went with speed.
The swineherd, chief of men, a speech began :

‘Stranger ! since thou desirest to the town 185

‘To go to-day, as bade my master, go :

‘I should have wished that thou wouldst stay to guard

‘The stalls ; but him I reverence and dread,

‘Lest he should chide hereafter, and severe

‘Are master’s chidings ; but come let us go ;

‘Day fast declines, at eve ’twill colder be.’ 190

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘I know, I see ; thou speak’st to one who thinks,

‘But let us go ; lead thou the way throughout ;

‘But give me, if there is one cut, a staff

‘To lean on, for thou say’st the way is rough.’ 195

He spoke, and o’er his shoulders thrèw the scrip,
Mean, torn, and on it was a twisted thong.

Eumæus gave a staff to suit his mind,

And they two went ; the dogs and herdsmen stayed

To guard the lodge, and to the town he led 200

The king, in guise a beggar, squalid, old,

Propped by a staff ; and mean the clothes he wore.

But when they, walking on the rugged road,

Approached the town and reached the fountain fair,

Well-wrought, from which the townsmen water drew,

Which Ithacus, Polyctor, Neritus, 205

Had made, and round it was a poplar grove,

Fed by the stream, on all sides circular,

And from a rock on high cold water flowed ;

Above an altar of the Nymphs was built, 210

Where all the wayfarers made offerings ;
 Melanthius met them, son of Dolius,
 Bringing the goats which in the flocks excelled,
 The suitors' feast ; two herdsmen followed him.
 He when he saw him chided and addressed 215
 Words foul and rough, and stirred Ulysses' heart :
 ' Now true it is the vile the vile conducts,
 (And God as ever couples like with like.)
 ' Whither, O worthless swineherd ! dost thou lead
 ' This glutton, wretched beggar, bane of feasts, 220
 ' Who will by many door-posts stand and rub
 ' His shoulders, and beg hard for scraps of food,
 ' For swords and tripods no competitor ?
 ' If thou wouldst give him me to guard my stalls,
 ' To sweep the folds, bring branches to the kids,
 ' He drinking whey would make his loins robust. 225
 ' But, having learned bad ways, he will not work,
 ' But cow'ring in the crowd prefers to beg,
 ' And his insatiable belly feed.
 ' But this I tell thee and it shall be done :
 ' If to divine Ulysses' house he comes, 230
 ' His pelted sides will many stools destroy,
 ' Thrown from the hands of men about his head.'

He spake, and passing by him with his heel
 Leapt in his foolery upon his haunch ;
 But from the foot-path thrust him not aside,
 For firm he stood. Ulysses was in doubt
 Whether to rush and kill him with his club, 235
 Or seize his head and dash it to the ground ;
 But he endured it and restrained himself.
 The swineherd at him glared and chided him,

*Natural
restraint*

And lifting up his hands thus prayed aloud : 240
‘ Nymphs of the fountain ! daughters of high Jove !
‘ If e’er Ulysses has burnt thighs to you
‘ Of lambs and kids, and covered them with fat,
‘ O ratify my prayer ! may that man come,
‘ And may God bring him ! then would he disperse
‘ The fooleries which in thine insolence
‘ Thou, wand’ring through the city, dost display ; 245
‘ But evil shepherds ruin bring on sheep.’

Melanthius, the goatherd, answered him :

‘ Gods ! what has this dog skilled in mischief said ?
‘ Him in a black ship far from Ithaca
‘ I’ll take to earn for me much property. 250
‘ O that Apollo with the silver bow
‘ Would in the palace strike Telemachus
‘ This day, or he were by the suitors killed,
‘ As surely as the day of his return
‘ Has to Ulysses, distant far, been lost !’

He spake, and left them walking slowly on ;
But to the king’s house went himself with speed. 255
He entered and among the suitors sate,
Fronting Eurymachus whom most he loved.
The servants by him placed a share of flesh,
The venerable housekeeper brought bread
To eat. Ulysses and the swineherd came 260
And near them stood ; the music of the harp
Came round, for Phemius began to sing.
Ulysses grasped the swineherd’s hand and said :
‘ Eumæus ! beauteous is Ulysses’ house,
‘ Easy to know and among many seen : 265
‘ Floor over floor is there, the hall adorned

‘With wall and cornices, the doors well-closed
‘And folding: none could such a house despise.
‘But many men, I see, are feasting there;
‘The smell arises, and the harp resounds 270
‘Which Gods have made companion of the feast.’

Swineherd Eumæus! thou didst thus reply:

‘Thou thinkest well, nor art unwise besides:
‘But let us counsel how these things shall be;
‘Either go first the well-built house within, 275
‘And with the suitors mix, while I remain;
‘Or, if thou wilt, remain while I go first:
‘But linger not, lest some one from without
‘May strike or chase thee; think, I pray, on this.’

Patient Ulysses answered him and said: 280

‘I know, I see; thou speak’st to one who thinks.
‘But go thou first, and I will here remain;
‘With stripes and blows not unacquainted I;
‘My mind is daring, for in waves and war
‘I woes have suffered; let this added be. 285
‘One cannot hide a craving appetite,
‘Destructive, which gives many ills to men,
‘For which e’en well-benched ships are fitted up
‘To cross the barren sea and injure foes.’

’Twas thus with one another they conversed. 290

A dog which lay there, Argus, lifted up
His head and ears; Ulysses’ dog, which he
Had bred but not enjoyed, for first he went
To sacred Troy, though ere that time young men
Had led him to wild goats and roes and hares. 295
There lay he abject, for his lord was gone,
Among much dung of mules and oxen, spread

Before the doors until Ulysses' hinds
Should take it the wide farm to fertilize.
There the dog Argus, full of vermin, lay : 300

But when he saw Ulysses coming near
He wagged his tail and laid down both his ears,
But to his master had not strength to come.

He gazed apart and wiped a tear away,
Not by Eumæus seen, and questioned him : 305

'Eumæus! strange this dog should lie on dung!

'In shape he's handsome, but I know not this,

'If he, besides this shape, is swift in chase,

'Or only such as are men's table-dogs,

'Whom their lords pamper but for ornament.' 310

Swineherd Eumæus! thou didst thus reply:

'This is the dog of one who died far off.

'If he were such in form and feats as when

'Ulysses left him when he went to Troy,

'Soon wond'ring thou wouldst see his speed and
strength. 315

'He never used to fly from any beast,

'Which in the deep wood's thicket he had chased,

'And well their tracks he knew; but now he lies

'In mis'ry; far from home his lord has died.

'For him the heedless women have no care,

'For servants, when their lords control them not, 320

'Are no more willing to perform their tasks;

'Since Jove takes half the value of a man

'Away, when slavery has brought him down.'

He spoke, and passed the well-built house within,
And straightway to the noble suitors went; 325

But black death's fate seized Argus suddenly,

Seeing Ulysses in the twentieth year.
Godlike Telemachus was first to see
The swineherd coming to the house, and quick
Made signal to invite him : he looked round 330
And took a seat, placed where the carver sate
And for the feasting suitors shared the meat ;
He brought and at the table put it down,
Fronting Telemachus, and there he sate.
The herald took a share and gave it him,
And from the basket lifted out the bread. 335
Ulysses near him went the house within,
In guise a wretched aged beggar-man,
Supported by a staff, while round his flesh
Were miserable garments, and upon
The ashen threshold sate within the doors,
Leaning against a shaft of cypress wood, 340
Which formerly a carpenter had planed,
And with a plumb-line straightened skilfully.
Telemachus the swineherd called and said,
Taking a whole loaf from a basket fair,
And flesh, while grasping them his hands were
stretched :
' These take and to the stranger give, and bid 345
' That he from all the suitors go and beg :
' Shame is no good thing for a man in need.'
He spoke : the swineherd, when he heard it, went
And standing near him said these wingèd words :
' Stranger ! Telemachus gives these, and bids 350
' That thou from all the suitors go and beg,
' And says that shame fits not a beggar-man.'
The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘Grant, royal Jove ! Telemachus to be
‘Among men prosperous ! May ev’ry thing
‘Which in his mind he meditates succeed !’ 355

He spake ; with both hands took and placed the food
Before his feet on his unseemly scrip,
And ate, while in the palace sang the bard.
When he had supped the bard divine had ceased,
And in the house the suitors clamour made. 360

Minerva, standing by Laertes’ son
Ulysses, urged him to collect meal-cakes
Among the suitors, that he might discern
Who upright were and who were lawless men,
But not e’en so would any save from death.
Standing at each one’s right he stretched his hand 365
To beg, as if a beggar-man of old.

They gave in pity and in wonder gazed,
And asked each other who and whence he was.
To them Melanthius, the goat-herd, said :
‘Hear me, ye suitors of the noble queen ! 370
‘About this stranger ; him I saw before ;
‘The swineherd brought him hither ; for himself
‘I know not whence he boasts his race to be.’

He spake : Antinous the swineherd chid :
‘Vile swineherd ! why bring this man to the town ?
‘Of vagabonds and other beggars foul 375
‘Have we not plenty, spoilers of our feasts ?
‘Art not content that here in crowds they waste
‘Thy master’s goods that thou invitest him ?’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply : 380
‘Antinous ! though good thou speak’st not well.
‘Who that himself from elsewhere comes invites

‘ Another stranger, if he be not one
 ‘ Of public officers, a soothsayer,
 ‘ A curer of disease, a carpenter,
 ‘ Or bard divine who may by song delight ? 385
 ‘ Those men are welcome o’er the boundless earth.
 ‘ None asks a beggar to consume himself.
 ‘ But more than all the suitors ever thou
 ‘ Art to Ulysses’ servants stern, to me
 ‘ Especially ; but I regard it not,
 ‘ While in the house the wise Penelope 390
 ‘ And the divine Telemachus survive.’

Prudent Telemachus in answer said :

‘ Be silent, nor with many words reply.
 ‘ Antinous is practised to contend
 ‘ With bitter words, and others too excites.’ 395

He spake, and thus addressed Antinous :

‘ Antinous ! good care thou tak’st of me,
 ‘ As father might of son, who bid’st me send
 ‘ By painful speech a stranger from the house.
 ‘ God bring it not to pass ! take thou and give ; 400
 ‘ I grudge it not, but rather recommend.
 ‘ Neither my mother heed, nor any one
 ‘ Of servants in Ulysses’ house in this ;
 ‘ But no such thought is thine, for rather thou
 ‘ Wouldst eat thyself than to another give.’

To him Antinous replied and said : 405

‘ Telemachus ! proud speaker ! unrestrained
 ‘ In thine audacity ! what hast thou said ?
 ‘ If all the suitors gave as much as thou,
 ‘ The house for three months would be rid of him.’

He spake, and shewed a footstool, which he took

From underneath the table, and on which 410
His shining feet while feasting he reposed.
The rest all gave, and filled the scrip with food.
Ulysses to the threshold was about
To go and taste the bounty of the Greeks,
But, standing by Antinous, he said :
' Give, friend ! thou seemest not the worst to be, 415
' But of the Greeks the best ; thou 'rt like a king ;
' Better than others thou shouldst give me bread,
' And I will praise thee o'er the boundless earth.
' I too once happy in a rich house dwelt,
' And often gave to such a wanderer, 420
' Whoe'er he was or in what need he came.
' Many my servants were, and other things
' In which men live well and are counted rich ;
' But Jove, the son of Saturn, struck me down,
' (For such his will) who on a voyage long 425
' With roving pirates prompted me to go
' To Egypt, that I might there be destroyed.
' I brought to anchor in Egyptus' stream
' My two-banked ships ; I bade then my dear friends
' There by the ships to stay and draw them up,
' And urged the watchmen to the heights to go : 430
' But, yielding to their pride and following
' Their own device, they speedily laid waste
' The beauteous fields of the Egyptians ;
' Their wives and infant children took, and slew
' The men, and soon the cry the city reached.
' Hearing the tumult, with th' appearing morn, 435
' They came, and all the plain with foot and horse
' And with the gleaming of the brass was filled.

'Jove, who delights in thunder, on my friends
 'Sent a base panic, nor did any dare
 'Resist, for evil stood on all sides round.
 'Then with sharp sword they many of us slew, 410
 'And some they took alive to work ; but me
 'They gave to Dmetor, son of Iasus,
 'Of Cyprus king, a visitor, to take
 'To Cyprus ; thence I wretched hither come.'

To him Antinous replied and said : 445

'What God has brought this pest, this bane of feasts ?
 'Stand in the middle, from my table far,
 'Lest at a bitter Egypt thou arrive
 'And Cyprus ; daring, shameless beggar thou !
 'By all in turn thou standest ; recklessly 450
 'They give thee ; there is no restraint, no ruth
 'In giving others' goods, where each has much.'

(The wise Ulysses said as he withdrew :

+ 'Alas ! thou hast no mind to suit thy form.
 'From thine own house thou wouldst not even give
 'A grain of salt to thine own suppliant, 455
 'Who hast not, sitting at another's board,
 'The heart to give some food where much there is.'

He spake : Antinous was more enraged,
 And looking sternly spake these wingèd words :

'No longer wilt thou well, I think, retreat 460
 'From out this house, who thus revilest me.'

He spake, a footstool seized, and with it struck
 His shoulder, to the right, upon his back.
 As firm as might a rock he stood, nor him
 The weapon of Antinous displaced.

Silent he shook his head and evil planned ; 465

Then to the threshold going sate and laid
 His full scrip down, and to the suitors said :
 ‘Hear me, ye suitors of the noble queen !
 ‘While what my mind compels me I shall say.
 ‘There is no grief or sorrow in the mind, 470
 ‘When one who for his own possessions fights,
 ‘For oxen or for white-fleeced sheep, is struck ;
 ‘But for my hunger, sad and ruinous,
 ‘Which causes many miseries to men,
 ‘Antinous has struck me : but, if Gods
 ‘And furies for the poor there are, may death 475
 ‘O’ertake Antinous before he weds !’

Antinous, Eupeithes’ son, replied :

‘Stranger ! sit still and eat, or elsewhere go,
 ‘Lest young men drag thee forth, for what thou say’st,
 ‘By hand or foot, and strip off all thy skin.’ 480

He spake, and all of them indignant were,
 And of the proud young men thus some one said :
 ‘Antinous ! thou didst not well to strike
 ‘A wretched wand’rer : O thou doomed to death !
 ‘If in the heav’n above there is a God.
 ‘The Gods, like strangers from a foreign land 485
 ‘And under varied forms, through cities pass,
 ‘Men’s insolence and justice to survey.’

The suitors spake : their words he heeded not ;
 Telemachus nursed great grief in his heart
 For him thus stricken ; yet upon the ground 490
 Not from his eyelids shed a tear, but shook
 His head in silence, deeply planning ills.
 When wise Penelope had heard of him
 In the house stricken, to her maids she said :

‘So may the archer Phoëbus strike thyself!’

The house-keeper Eurynome replied : 495

‘Aye! if there were fulfilment of our pray’rs,

‘Not one of them would reach the fair-throned dawn.’

To her the wise Penelope replied :

‘Nurse! all are enemies, for ills they plan ;

‘But most Antinous is like black fate. 500

‘Some wretched stranger wanders through the house

‘To beg, for so his poverty compels ;

‘The others there all filled his scrip and gave ;

‘He with a footstool his right shoulder struck.’

Among her maidens in her chamber thus 505

She converse held, the while Ulysses supped.

Then she the swineherd to her called and said :

‘Go, good Eumæus! bid the stranger come,

‘That I may welcome him, and ask if he

‘Has anything of brave Ulysses heard 510

‘Or seen ; he seems a wand’rer from afar.’

Swineherd Eumæus! thou didst thus reply :

‘If, queen! the Grecians would but silence keep,

‘He would thy dear heart soothe by what he tells.

‘Three nights I had him and three days detained 515

‘Within my lodge, for first he came to me,

‘Escaping from the ship, but had not made

‘An end of the recital of his woes.

‘As when a man beholds a bard who, taught

‘By God, sings poems which delight mankind,

‘And they desire to hear him when he sings ; 520

‘So me, while sitting in the house he charmed.

‘He claims to be Ulysses’ friend of old,

‘Dwelling in Crete, where Minos’ race belong ;

‘Thence, suff’ring sorrows, he has hither come,
 ‘Roving from place to place ; and he affirms 525
 ‘That of Ulysses living he has heard,
 ‘In the rich land of the Thesprotians,
 ‘Quite near, and that he brings much treasure home.’

To him the wise Penelope replied :

‘Go, call him that he face to face may speak.
 ‘Let them, or at the doors or in the house, 530
 ‘Sit and enjoy themselves ; their mind is glad,
 ‘For in their house their goods unwasted lie,
 ‘Bread and sweet wine, and these their servants eat :
 ‘But they, our house frequenting ev’ry day,
 ‘Oxen and sheep and fat goats sacrifice, 535
 ‘Keep festival, and drink sweet wine cost-free ;
 ‘And great the waste, for there is not a man,
 ‘Such as Ulysses, from the house to drive
 ‘The curse ; but if Ulysses should return
 ‘To his paternal land, he with his son
 ‘Would punish soon the violence of men.’ 540

She spake : Telemachus then sneezed aloud ;
 The house re-echoed, and Penelope
 Laughed, and Eumæus quickly thus addressed :

‘Go quick ! the stranger to my presence call ;
 ‘Hear’st thou not how my son at all my words 545
 ‘Has sneezed ? then so may death not incomplete
 ‘To all the suitors come, nor one escape !
 ‘Another thing I tell thee, weigh it well :
 ‘If I should find him telling all things true,
 ‘A cloak and tunic, garments fair, I’ll give.’ 550

She spake : the swineherd heard her speech and went,
 And standing near him spoke these wingèd words :

‘Penelope thee, rev’rend stranger ! calls,
 ‘The mother of Telemachus ; her mind
 ‘Prompts her about her husband to enquire
 ‘However suff’ring woes herself ; she will, 555
 ‘If she should find thee telling all things true,
 ‘Give thee a cloak and tunic, things of which [town,
 ‘Thou’rt much in need : thou, begging through the
 ‘Shalt feed thy stomach, and who wills will give.’

Patient Ulysses answered him and said : 560
 ‘Eumæus ! soon to wise Penelope,
 ‘Icarius’ daughter, I the truth will tell ;
 ‘For well I know about him ; we have had
 ‘Sorrows in common ; but I fear the band
 ‘Of cruel suitors, men whose haughtiness
 ‘And violence reach to the iron sky. 565
 ‘For even now, when that man striking me,
 ‘As through the house I went and did no ill,
 ‘Caused me much suff’ring, not Telemachus
 ‘Nor any other man assisted me.
 ‘Bid then Penelope the house within
 ‘To stay, however anxious she may be, 570
 ‘Till sun-set ; let her then her questions put
 ‘About her husband’s home-returning day,
 ‘Close by the fire ; for sorry clothes I wear,
 ‘As thou whom first I supplicated know’st.’

He spake : the swineherd when he heard it went :
 Him going forth Penelope addressed : 575
 ‘Dost thou not bring him ? what, Eumæus ! thinks
 ‘This wand’rer ? fears he any lawless one,
 ‘Or in the palace for some other cause
 ‘Is awed ? a modest beggar never thrives.’

Swineherd Eumæus ! thou didst thus reply :

‘ Rightly he speaks, as any one would think, 580

‘ Shunning the insolence of haughty men.

‘ He bids thee wait until the set of sun,

‘ And this, O queen ! is better, for thyself,

‘ Alone the stranger to address and hear.’

To him the wise Penelope replied : 585

‘ The stranger’s not unwise whoe’er he be ;

‘ Not among mortals anywhere do men

‘ Such insolent insensate deeds contrive.’

’Twas thus she spoke : the swineherd to the band
Of suitors went when he had all explained, 590

And to Telemachus spoke wingèd words,

Holding his head close lest the rest should hear :

‘ Friend ! I must go to guard the swine and goods,

‘ Both thine and mine ; let all here be thy charge.

‘ First of thyself take care, deliberate 595

‘ Lest aught thou suffer ; many of the Greeks

‘ Are planning evils for thee, whom may Jove

‘ Before destruction comes to us destroy !’

The wise Telemachus replied and said :

‘ So it shall be, dear friend ! go thou at eve ;

‘ Come in the morning, and fair victims bring ; 600

‘ All be with me and with the Gods in charge !’

He spake : the swineherd on the polished seat
Sate down ; when he his mind with food and drink
Had satisfied, he hasted to the swine,

And left the courts and house with suitors filled.

They were delighted with the dance and song, 605

For now the eventide of day had come.

BOOK XVIII. ✓

THERE came besides a public beggar-man,
 Whose wont it was to beg throughout the town
 Of Ithaca, for greed notorious
 To eat and drink unceasingly ; he had
 Nor strength nor force, though bulky to behold.
 Arnæus was his name ; this from his birth 5
 His worthy mother gave him, but the youths
 Had called him Irus, for he used to go
 As messenger, when any gave command.
 He drove Ulysses from his own abode,
 And chiding spoke to him these wingèd words :
 ‘ Go from the porch, old man ! lest thou be drawn 10
 ‘ Out by the foot ; dost thou not see how all
 ‘ Make signs to me, and bid me drag thee out ?
 ‘ Yet this I shame to do ; but rise, or soon
 ‘ A fight with hands will be between us two.’

Ulysses sternly eyeing him addressed :
 ‘ Sirrah ! no ill to thee I do nor speak, 15
 ‘ Nor grudge that any give to thee, though much
 ‘ Thou gettest ; but this threshold will contain
 ‘ Us both, nor is it fit that thou shouldst grudge
 ‘ What is another’s : thou, like me, appear’st
 ‘ A wanderer, but wealth the Gods bestow.
 ‘ Challenge me not to fight with hands, lest thou 20
 ‘ Enrage me, and I stain thy breast and lips,
 ‘ Old as I am, with blood : more peace would be
 ‘ To-morrow for me, nor I think wouldst thou
 ‘ Come to Ulysses’ house a second time.’

The vagrant Irus him in rage addressed :

25

‘ Ye Gods ! how trippingly this hungry wretch,

‘ Like an old cinder-grov’ling woman, talks !

‘ I will a mischief do him, strike him down,

‘ With both hands driving from his jaws his teeth

‘ Upon the ground, as of a husk-fed swine.

‘ Gird thyself now that all those here may see

30

‘ Us fight ; how wilt thou with one younger fight ?’

Before the lofty doors with all their mind

On the wrought threshold thus they were enraged.

Antinous together put them both,

And to the suitors said with pleasant laugh :

35

‘ Friends ! never was there such thing done before :

‘ What sport has some God to the palace brought !

‘ The stranger now and Irus quarrelling

‘ Provoke a fight ; quick let us join the two.’

He spoke, and laughing all of them uprose

40

And round the ragged beggars made a ring.

Then spoke Antinous, Eupeithes’ son :

‘ Hear, noble suitors ! what I have to say :

‘ These paunches of the goat upon the fire

‘ Are being roasted ; we for supper these,

‘ Filling with blood and fat, had laid aside.

45

‘ Which of the two shall conquer and be best,

‘ Let him rise up and choose whiche’er he wills ;

‘ Hereafter he shall always feast with us,

‘ Nor will we any other beggar-men

‘ Permit to come among us and to beg.’

So spake Antinous : his words pleased all ;

50

But wise Ulysses craftily replied :

‘ O friends ! it is not for an aged man

‘ And toil-worn with a younger one to fight ;
 ‘ But hunger that to evil leads a man
 ‘ Compels that I should be subdued by blows.
 ‘ But come now ! all of you a firm oath swear 55
 ‘ That no one of you, taking Irus’ part,
 ‘ Will with his heavy hand unfairly strike
 ‘ And violently conquer me for him.’

He spake : they all as he demanded swore.

[When they had sworn and made the oath complete]
 The sacred prince Telemachus thus spoke : 60
 ‘ O stranger ! if thine heart and noble mind
 ‘ Prompt thee to drive this man away, fear not
 ‘ Another of the Greeks : with many more
 ‘ He will whoever strikes thee have to fight.
 ‘ I am the one who strangers entertains :
 ‘ Antinous, Eurymachus, assent,
 ‘ Princes and prudent men, to what I say.’ 65

He spake, they all approved : Ulysses then
 Girt round his loins his rags, and shewed his thighs,
 Fair, large ; his shoulders broad appeared, his breast
 And brawny arms. Minerva, standing near
 The people’s sovereign, enlarged his limbs. 70
 The suitors all admired exceedingly,
 And thus one looking at his neighbour said :
 ‘ Irus, bad Irus, will have self-sought woe,
 ‘ Such loins from out his rags the old man shews.’

They spoke, and Irus’ mind was sorely moved : 75
 But, spite of that, the servants girded him,
 And dragged him onward, terrified, by force,
 While round his limbs his flesh was quivering.
 Antinous rebuked him, and addressed :

‘ Now, boastful lubber ! live not nor exist,
 ‘ If thou shouldst tremble at and greatly fear 80
 ‘ This aged man by misery oppressed.
 ‘ But this I tell thee, and it shall be done :
 ‘ Should he o’ercome thee and superior be,
 ‘ I’ll send thee to Epirus, putting thee
 ‘ On board a black ship, to king Echëtus,
 ‘ Of all men the tormentor, who will cut 85
 ‘ Thy nose and ears off with the cruel brass,
 ‘ And draw thy bowels for the dogs to eat.’

He spake : but terror still more seized his limbs :
 They dragged him forward : both upreared their hands.
 Patient divine Ulysses doubted then 90
 Whether to strike him so that when he fell
 His life should leave him there, or rather strike
 Lightly and lay him prostrate on the earth.
 This, as he doubted, seemed the best ; to strike
 Lightly, for fear the Greeks discover him.
 Both reared their hands, and Irus struck a blow 95
 On the right shoulder of Ulysses ; he
 Struck him beneath the ear, upon the neck,
 And broke the bones within ; the purple blood
 Welled from his mouth, and shrieking in the dust
 He fell, and gnashed his teeth, and kicked the ground.
 The noble suitors, lifting up their hands,
 Half died with laughter : but Ulysses seized 100
 His foot, and dragged him through the portico,
 Till to the hall and porch’s doors he came ;
 Then set him down against the court-yard fence,
 Placed in his hand a staff and thus addressed :
 ‘ Sit here and drive away the swine and dogs ; 105

‘Wretch as thou art! no longer lord it o’er
‘Strangers and beggars, lest worse ill thou reap.’

He spake, and o’er his shoulders threw the srip,
Mean, torn, and on it was a twisted thong.
Retreating to the threshold he sate down ; 110
They entered with gay laugh, and greeted him :
‘Stranger ! may Jove and the immortal Gods
‘Grant thee thy wish, and what delights thy mind,
‘Who this insatiate man hast made to cease
‘From begging in the country ; for we soon 115
‘Will to Epirus, to king Echëtus,
‘Of all men the tormentor, send him off.’

They spake : Ulysses in the omen joyed.
Antinous before him placed a paunch,
Large, full of fat and blood. Amphinomus
Took two loaves from a basket, gave him these, 120
And pledged him with a golden cup, and said :
‘Hail, reverend stranger ! henceforth be success
‘To thee, though now by many ills opprest !’

Prudent Ulysses answered him and said :
‘Amphinomus ! thou seemest very wise, 125
‘Of such a father sprung ; of his renown
‘I heard, that Nisus of Dulichium
‘Is brave and rich ; they say that thou art sprung
‘From him ; thou seem’st a man of eloquence.
‘I tell thee, then, consider it and hear :
‘Earth nothing weaker than a man supports, 130
‘Of all the things that breathe and creep thereon ;
‘He thinks no ill hereafter to endure,
‘While strength the Gods give and his knees move free ;
‘But when the blessed Gods bring miseries,

‘These he with suff’ring mind reluctant bears. 135
‘The thought of men on earth is as the day
‘Which the great sire of men and Gods accords :
‘For among men I was accounted rich ;
‘And giving way to force and violence
‘I perpetrated many foolish things,
‘In father and in brothers putting trust. 140
‘Therefore let no man ever lawless be,
‘But quiet take what gifts the Gods bestow.
‘What wicked deeds I see the suitors plan !
‘Wasting the goods, dishonouring the wife
‘Of one who will not, as I think, be long
‘Absent from friends and his paternal land, 145
‘But now is near it. May the God convey
‘Thee to thine home in secret ! mayst thou not
‘Meet him when to his country he returns !
‘He and the suitors will not bloodlessly,
‘I think, be parted when he home shall come.’ 150

He spake, and with libation drank sweet wine,
And placed the goblet in the chieftain’s hand.
He through the house went grieving in his heart,
Shaking his head, for ill his mind presaged ;
Yet fate escaped not ; him Minerva bound 155
By the spear of Telemachus to die.
Quick on the throne from whence he rose he sate :
Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, caused a thought
To wise Penelope, Icarius’ child,
Before the suitors to appear, that so 160
She might their thoughts lay open, and still more
Be honoured by her husband and her son.
She laughed unmeaningly, and thus she spake :

‘Euronyme ! my mind, though not before,
 ‘Excites me to the suitors to appear,
 ‘Detested as they are, that to my son, 165
 ‘For so ’twould best be, I a word may say ;
 ‘With the proud suitors not at all to mix,
 ‘Who speak him fair but evil plan behind.’

Euronyme, the house-keeper, replied :

‘In truth, my child ! all this thou speakest right : 170
 ‘Go to thy son and say it nor conceal :
 ‘But wash thy body, and anoint thy cheeks,
 ‘And go not thus with face defiled by tears,
 ‘Since it is wrong to grieve incessantly.
 ‘For now thy son is of such age as thou, 175
 ‘When he was born, to the immortal Gods
 ‘Didst pray that thou shouldst see him bearded man.’

Prudent Penelope to her replied :

‘Euronyme ! though eager, urge not this,
 ‘To wash my flesh and rub myself with oil.
 ‘The Gods who in Olympus dwell destroyed 180
 ‘My beauty, from the time he sailed away.
 ‘Hippodamïa and Autonoe
 ‘Bid come, to stand beside me in the house ;
 ‘To men, for shame, I will not go alone !’

She spake : the old dame from the house went forth,
 To tell the maids and urge them to attend. 185

Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts :
 She poured sweet sleep upon Icarius’ child ;
 She lay and slumbered ; on the couch her limbs
 Relaxed ; meanwhile the Goddess gave her gifts 190
 Ambrosial that the Grecians might admire.

With heav’nly beauty first her face she decked,

With such as fair-crowned Venus is bedewed,
When to the Graces' lovely band she goes.
She made her taller, larger to behold, 195
She made her whiter than sawn ivory.

This having done the Goddess went away.
The white-armed maidens, babbling as they walked,
Came from the house ; sweet sleep deserted her,
And with her hand she wiped her face and said : 200
'Soft sleep has cowered o'er me woe-begone :
'O that the chaste Diana would but grant
'A death as soft as this e'en now ! that I
'No more might wear my life in grief away,
'For my dear husband's varied excellence
'Pining ; for he was chiefest of the Greeks.' 205

Thus speaking, from the chamber she came down,
But not alone ; two maidens followed her.
When to the suitors came the noble dame
She by a pillar of the strong roof stood,
Holding a slender veil before her cheeks, 210
And a chaste maiden stood on either side.
Their knees relaxed, their mind was soothed with love,
And all desired to have her for a wife.

She her dear son, Telemachus, addressed :
'Telemachus ! thy mind is firm no more ; 215
'Thou when a child didst better things propose ;
'But now, when grown and to youth's standard come,
'And when a stranger gazing on thy form
'And face would think thou wert a noble's son,
'Thy mind and counsel are no longer right ; 220
'(O what a deed has in the house been done !)
'A guest permitting to be outraged thus.

‘How, if a stranger sitting in our house
‘Should suffer thus from grievous violence,
‘Would shame and scorn await thee among men!’ 225

The wise Telemachus replied and said :

‘Mother ! that thou art wroth I blame thee not ;
‘But in my mind I think I know it all,
‘The good and bad : I was a child before,
‘But all wise thoughts I cannot entertain. 230
‘These men perplex me who beside me sit,
‘One with another planning evil deeds ;
‘And there are none who will my helpers be.
‘But still it was not by the suitors’ will
‘That between Irus and the stranger rose
‘The fight ; in strength he was superior.
‘O father Jove ! Minerva ! Phœbus ! would 235
‘The suitors in our house might shake their heads,
‘Some in the court and some within the house
‘Subdued, and that their limbs were loosened so
‘As Irus at the gate is sitting now,
‘Shaking his head and like a drunken man, 240
‘Nor on his feet can upright stand, nor go
‘Returning homeward, for his limbs are loosed.’

’Twas thus that they to one another spoke :

Eurymachus addressed Penelope :

‘Prudent Penelope ! Icarus’ child ! 245
‘If in Iasian Argos all the Greeks
‘Could see thee, in the morning there would feast
‘More suitors in thine house, who dost excel
‘Women in form and size and mind within.’

Prudent Penelope replied and said :

‘Eurymachus ! th’ immortals have destroyed 250

' My excellence, my beauty and my form,
 ' Since when the Greeks embarked for Ilium,
 ' And when my spouse Ulysses with them went.
 ' If he should come as guardian of my life,
 ' Greater and fairer would be my renown. 255
 ' I am in sorrow now ; the Deity
 ' Has on me violently brought such woes.
 ' When he departing left his native land
 ' He took my right hand by the wrist, and said :
 ' " My wife ! I think not that the well-greaved Greeks
 ' " Will all of them return unharmed from 'Troy ; 260
 ' " For they say Trojan men are warriors,
 ' " As spearmen and with arrows skilled to shoot ;
 ' " And drivers of swift-footed steeds, who soon
 ' " Decide the contest of the doubtful war.
 ' " I know not then if God will send me back,
 ' " Or there in Troy I may be seized by death. 265
 ' " Here in thy charge let all be ; of my sire
 ' " My mother be thou mindful as till now,
 ' " Or even more when I am far away.
 ' " But when thou see'st the boy a bearded man
 ' " Leave him at home, and marry whom thou wilt." 270
 ' So spake he, and it all is now fulfilled.
 ' Night it will be when hateful marriage comes
 ' To me undone, whose bliss Jove took away.
 ' But this sad woe comes on my heart and mind :
 ' This was not formerly the suitors' plan, 275
 ' Who wished, and with each other vied, to wed
 ' A worthy woman and a rich man's child :
 ' For those indeed bring oxen and fat sheep,
 ' Feast for the damsels' friends, and give rich gifts,

‘Nor others’ unrequited substance eat.’ 280

She spake : divine Ulysses in his mind
Rejoiced that she invited thus their gifts,
And soothed their minds with honeyed words, the while
Her mind was meditating other things.

Antinous, Eupheithes’ son, replied :

‘Prudent Penelope ! Icarius’ child ! 285

‘Receive the gifts which who will of the Greeks

‘May bring ; ’tis wrong a present to refuse ;

‘Nor to our farms nor elsewhere will we go

‘Till of the Greeks thou marry who is best.’

So spake Antinous : his words pleased well, 290

And to bring presents each a herald sent.

One for Antinous a large robe brought,

Fair, variegated, and there were thereon

Twelve clasps, all gold, with well-bent hooks bedecked.

A well-wrought necklace for Eurymachus, 295

Golden and set in amber, like the sun,

One brought : two servants for Eurydamas

Brought ear-rings, wrought with triple eye-like drops,

And much their beauty shone : a servant brought

A collar, ornament most beautiful, 300

From Prince Pisander’s house, Polyctus’ son :

And each Greek brought a different fair gift.

Then to her chamber she, divine one, went :

The beauteous gifts her maidens with her bore.

They to the dance and to the lovely song

Delighted turned, and stayed till ev’ning came. 305

Dark ev’ning on them came still revelling ;

They forthwith in the house three braziers placed

To show them light, and fire-wood heaped around,

Long since quite dry and lately cleft with brass,
And mingled brands therewith : Ulysses' maids 310
Lighted them up by turns, and thus to them
The noble wise Ulysses spake himself :
' Ye maids of king Ulysses, absent long,
' Go to the house where is the honoured queen :
' Near her the spindles turn, and in the house 315
' Sitting delight her mind, or card the wool ;
' But I to all these men will light supply ;
' E'en should they wish to wait for fair-throned morn
' They shall not tire me ; I can much endure.'

He spake : they laughed and at each other looked,
And fair Melanthe foully chided him ; 320
Her Dolius begat, Penelope
Tended, and as her own child brought her up,
And gave her playthings ; she not even so
Felt for the sorrow of Penelope, 325
But basely with Eurymachus intrigued.
She chid Ulysses with reviling words :
' Thou, wretched stranger ! art deprived of sense,
' Nor wilt thou to some smithy go to sleep,
' Or to some lodging-house, but babblest here
' Boldly mid many men, nor in thy thought 330
' Hast fear ; wine surely seizes on thy mind,
' Or it is always such, who say'st vain words.
' Exultest thou that thou hast overcome
' The beggar Irus ? take thou heed lest soon
' A better one than Irus may rise up,
' Who, beating with his sturdy hands thy head, 335
' Smearing with blood may send thee from the house.'

Ulysses sternly eyeing her replied :

‘Soon will I go to tell Telemachus
‘The words which thou hast said, thou shameless one !
‘That he may forthwith cut thee limb from limb.’

He frightened thus the women with his words : 340
They hurried through the house, the limbs of each
Faltered with fear; they thought he spoke the truth.
He by the burning braziers, shewing light,
Stood looking on them all; his heart the while
Thought on what would not unaccomplished be. 345
Minerva from their grievous insolence
Did not permit the suitors to refrain,
That rage might come more on Ulysses’ heart.

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,
Thus to them, scoffing at Ulysses, said, 350
And merriment to his companions caused :
‘Hear me, ye suitors of the noble queen !
‘While what my mind commands me I shall say.
‘Not to Ulysses’ house has this man come
‘Without a God : the torches’ light to me
‘Appears from him and from his head to come,
‘For there no hair, not e’en a little, grows.’ 355

Warlike Ulysses then he thus addressed :
‘Stranger ! if I engage thee, wouldst thou take
‘My service at the land’s extremity,
‘(There shall be ample wages) gath’ring stones,
‘And tall trees planting ? I’d give yearly food, 360
‘Put on thee clothes, give sandals to thy feet ;
‘But thou, for thou hast learned an evil trade,
‘Wilt not consent to go to work, but wilt
‘Prefer to beg in public, till thou hast
‘Wherewith to feed thy greedy appetite.’

Prudent Ulysses answered him, and said :

365

‘ Eurymachus ! if there were rivalry
 ‘ Between us two in labour, in the spring
 ‘ When days grow long, in mowing grass, and I
 ‘ Had a curved scythe and thou another such,
 ‘ To try our labour fasting until dark,
 ‘ And there were grass at hand ; or if again 370
 ‘ There oxen were to drive, the best, sleek, large,
 ‘ Both filled with grass, in age and burthen paired,
 ‘ Of no mean strength, and if there were a field
 ‘ Four-acred, whose soil yielded to the plough,
 ‘ Thou ’dst see if I could lengthened furrows cut ; 375
 ‘ Or if the son of Saturn should this day
 ‘ Cause war from somewhere, and I had a shield,
 ‘ Two spears, and helmet fitted to my brows,
 ‘ Thou ’dst see me mingling with the first in fight,
 ‘ Nor wouldst thou then my appetite reproach. 380
 ‘ But thou art insolent, thy mind is rude ;
 ‘ Thou think’st thou art a great and mighty man,
 ‘ Consorting with a few and those not good.
 ‘ But should Ulysses come and reach his home,
 ‘ Soon would the gates, though very wide they are, 385
 ‘ Seem narrow for thee, flying through the porch.’

He spake : Eurymachus was more enraged,
 And looking sternly spake these wingèd words :

‘ Wretch ! I will soon some mischief perpetrate
 ‘ For what thou boldly, publicly, dost speak, 390
 ‘ Nor fearest : wine sure seizes on thy mind,
 ‘ Or always it is such, who speak’st vain words.’
 [‘ Art mad, the beggar Irus conquering ?’]

He spake, and took a stool ; Ulysses sate,

Fearing Eurymachus, before the knees
Of the Dulichian Amphinomus. 395

He on his right hand struck the cup-bearer,
And the bowl sounded as to earth it fell,
And he lay groaning, prostrate in the dust.
Through the dark house the suitors clamour made,
And thus one looking to his neighbour said : 400
' Would that the stranger, elsewhere wandering,
' Had died before he came ! he would not then
' Have caused such uproar. We for beggars now
' Contend, and in the banquet there will be
' No pleasure, since these baser deeds prevail.'

The sacred prince, Telemachus, thus spoke : 405
' Sirs ! ye are mad, nor in your minds conceal
' The food and drink ; some God sure stirs you up.
' But, having feasted well, go home to sleep,
' When your mind bids you ; I drive none away.'

He spoke : they all, with teeth fixed in their lips, 410
Admired what boldly spake Telemachus.

Amphinomus to them harangued, and said,
[The son of Nisus, of Aretias son :]

' My friends ! none surely would be vexed or rail
' With angry words at what is justly said. 415
' No more the stranger treat with arrogance,
' Nor any servant in Ulysses' house.
' Come, let the cup-bearer make offerings,
' That, when we have libation made, we may
' Go home to sleep, and in Ulysses' house 420
' May leave the stranger to Telemachus
' In charge, for to his friendly house he came.'

He spake, and said words pleasing to them all ;

For them a bowl the hero Mulius,
 Dulichian herald, of Amphinomus
 The servant, mingled and distributed
 To all in order. To the blessed Gods 425
 They made libation, and the sweet wine drank.
 When they had made libation, and had drunk
 All that their mind desired, they quickly went
 Each to his own house to lie down to sleep.

BOOK XIX.

DIVINE Ulysses in the house alone
 Planned with Minerva's aid the suitors' death,
 And to Telemachus these wingèd words spake :
 ' Telemachus ! 'twere well all warlike arms
 ' To place within, but with soft words beguile 5
 ' The suitors, when they miss them and inquire :
 ' " Out of the smoke I placed them, for no more
 ' " Are they like those which, when he went to Troy,
 ' " Ulysses left behind, but have been soiled
 ' " Where the fire's vapour reached them ; and besides
 ' " The Deity has placed this greater thing 10
 ' " Within my mind, lest ye, o'ercome by wine,
 ' " Should raise a quarrel and each other wound,
 ' " And on the feast and wooing bring disgrace ;
 ' " For of itself the steel excites a man."

He spake : Telemachus his sire obeyed,
 And summoning addressed Euryclea :

‘ Nurse ! come now, keep the women in the house,
‘ While in the chamber I my father’s arms
‘ Lay up, which now uncared-for smoke defiles,
‘ Since the departure of my father ; then
‘ I was an infant ; I would place them now
‘ Where from the fire the vapour will not reach.’ 20

To him the nurse Euryclea replied :

‘ Would that, my child ! thou prudence wouldst assume,
‘ Care for thine house, and all thy goods protect !
‘ But who will go with thee to bear a light ?
‘ The maids who ought thou ’lt not permit to go.’ 25

Prudent Telemachus replied and said :

‘ This stranger will : I will not idle leave
‘ One who my food tastes and who comes from far.’

So spake he : not unheeded flew his word,
And of the well-built house she closed the doors. 30
The two, Ulysses and his noble son,

With haste the helmets and the bossy shields
And the sharp spears brought in ; Minerva held
A golden lamp and gave them beauteous light.

Telemachus his father then addressed : 35

‘ Father ! I see a wonder with mine eyes :
‘ The palace walls, the space between the beams,
‘ The pine-wood rafters, and the columns tall,
‘ Shine to my eyes, as though of burning fire :
‘ Some God of those who dwell in heav’n is here.’ 40

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ Be silent ! check thy thoughts ; no questions ask :
‘ This claim the Gods who in Olympus dwell.
‘ Go thou to sleep and I will here remain,
‘ That I may call thy mother and the maids ; 45

‘She in her grief will many questions ask.’

He spake : throughout the house Telemachus

Went to his chamber to lie down, below

• The lighted torches where before he lay,

When sweet sleep o’er him came ; and lying there

He waited till divine Aurora came.

50

Divine Ulysses in the house alone

Planned with Minerva’s aid the suitors’ death.

Forth from her chamber wise Penelope,

Like golden Venus or Diana, came.

Near to the fire they placed a seat whereon

55

She sate, with ivory and silver wrought,

Which once the artizan Icmalius

Had made, and placed a footstool for her feet

Attached thereto, where a large fleece was thrown :

There then the wise Penelope sate down.

The white-armed maidens from the palace came ;

60

The food and tables they removed and cups

From which the over-bearing men had drunk.

Fire from the braziers on the ground they threw,

And on it heaped much wood for light and warmth.

Melanthe then again Ulysses chid :

65

‘Stranger ! still wilt thou trouble us by night,

‘Through the house ranging and the women watch ?

‘But, wretch ! get out of doors ; enjoy thy feast,

‘Or stricken with a brand thou soon shalt go !’

Ulysses sternly eyeing her replied :

70

‘Why angrily attack me ? shameless one !

‘Is it because I squalid am and wear

‘Vile garments, and go begging through the town ?

‘For need compels ; such vagrants, beggars are.

‘I too once prosp’rous in a rich house dwelt, 75
 ‘And often gave to such a wanderer,
 ‘Whoe’er he was and in what need he came.
 ‘Many my servants were, and other things
 ‘In which men live well and are counted rich ;
 ‘But Saturn’s son destroyed me ; ’twas his will ; 80
 ‘So, woman ! take thou heed lest thou shouldst lose
 ‘The beauteous form wherewith thou art the chief
 ‘Among the maidens, and thy mistress be
 ‘Enraged with thee ; or lest Ulysses come,
 ‘For there is still some hope. If he is dead 85
 ‘Nor will return, he, by Apollo’s grace,
 ‘Has such a son as is Telemachus.
 ‘No woman in the house who does foul deeds
 ‘Will him escape ; he is not of such age.’

So spake he : and the wise Penelope
 Heard him, and thus her hand-maiden reproved : 90
 ‘Bold, shameless one ! nor dost thou me escape,
 ‘Doing what thou shalt pay for with thine head.
 ‘Well knew’st thou, for thou heard’st it from myself,
 ‘That I would ask the stranger in the house
 ‘About my husband ; for I greatly grieve.’ 95

She spake, and then addressed Eurynome,
 The house-keeper : ‘Eurynome ! go bring
 ‘A seat, and place thereon a woolly skin ;
 ‘That sitting down the stranger may recite
 ‘His news, and hear me : I would question him.’

She spake: the servant quickly brought and placed
 A polished seat, and spread a fleece thereon. 100
 There suffering divine Ulysses sate ;
 And to them wise Penelope began :

‘Stranger ! I first of all will question thee ;
‘Who art thou? whence? what parents, city, thine?’ 105

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

‘Lady ! no mortal on the boundless earth
‘Could blame thee ; to the sky thy fame extends,
‘As of some noble king, who, like a God,
‘O’er many valiant subjects bearing sway, 110
‘Justice maintains; for whom black earth brings forth
‘Barley and wheat, and trees are weighed with fruit,
‘Strong sheep bring forth, and fish the sea supplies
‘In his good rule, and subjects valiant are.
‘Ask me then other questions in thine house,
‘Nor of my race and native land inquire, 115
‘Lest thou the more with sorrows fill my mind
‘Rememb’ring them. I am a man of woes ;
‘It is not fit that, in a stranger’s house,
‘I should lamenting and bewailing sit,
‘For it is bad to grieve unceasingly, 120
‘Lest any servant blame me, or thyself,
‘And say that, weighed by wine, I weep too much.’

To him the wise Penelope replied :

‘Stranger ! th’immortals have indeed destroyed
‘My excellence, my beauty, and my form,
‘Since when the Greeks embarked for Ilium, 125
‘And when my spouse Ulysses with them went.
‘If he should come, as guardian of my life,
‘Greater and fairer would be my renown.
‘I am in sorrow now ; the Deity
‘Thus violently on me brought such woes.
‘[As many chiefs as o’er the island rule, 130
‘Samos, Zacynthus, and Dulichium,

‘ And dwell in sunny Ithaca itself,
‘ Woo me against my will, and waste the house]
‘ Not strangers then I heed, nor suppliants,
‘ Nor heralds who are public officers ; 135
‘ But pining for Ulysses melt my heart.
‘ They urge the marriage, but I plan deceits :
‘ God first of all inspired my mind to weave :
‘ Within the house a web I fixed and wove,
‘ Fine, beyond measure large, and said to them : 140
‘ “ Young suitors ! since Ulysses now is dead,
‘ “ Delay to urge my marriage on me till
‘ “ The web I finish, lest my threads be vain :
‘ “ For brave Laertes ’tis a winding-sheet,
‘ “ When of long-sleeping death the fate shall come, 145
‘ “ That no Greek matron may indignant be
‘ “ That one so rich should die without a shroud.”
‘ This said I, and their noble mind agreed.
‘ I, while by day the mighty web I wove,
‘ Unravelled it by torch-light in the night. 150
‘ Three years by craft I thus misled the Greeks ;
‘ But when the fourth year came and hours went on
‘ With waning months, and many days were past,
‘ Then, through the shameless, senseless maidens’ means,
‘ They came and found me, and with words reproached ;
‘ So I completed it against my will. 155
‘ I can the marriage nor escape nor find
‘ Other device : my parents urge me much
‘ To wed ; my son is grieved that they consume
‘ His goods, for he is now grown up and can 160
‘ Protect his house, and Jove gives him renown.
‘ But tell me still thy race and whence thou art ;

- ‘ From an old oak or rock thou art not sprung.’
The wise Ulysses answered her and said :
‘ Lady ! Ulysses’ venerable wife ! 165
‘ Wilt thou not cease from asking of my race ?
‘ Yet I will tell thee : surely thou wilt cause
‘ More griefs than those wherewith I am oppressed ;
‘ For ’tis his lot when for so long a time
‘ One from his home is absent, as am I,
‘ Wand’ring o’er many towns and suff’ring woes : 170
‘ Yet what thou askest of me I will tell.
‘ Crete is a country in the dark sea’s midst,
‘ Beauteous and rich, with water circled round :
‘ Men numberless, and ninety towns there are :
‘ The language there of diff’rent men is mixed :
‘ There are Achæans, true-bred Cretans brave, 175
‘ Cydonians, three-crested Dorians,
‘ And the divine Pelasgi : therein is
‘ Gnosus, a city large, where Minos ruled,
‘ (Who ev’ry nine years talked with mighty Jove,)
‘ Sire of my sire, the brave Deucalion. 180
‘ Deucalion begat me and the king
‘ Idomeneus ; he with th’ Atridæ went
‘ In the beaked ships to Troy ; my name renowned
‘ Is Æthon ; younger I, he first and best.
‘ I saw Ulysses there, and gave him gifts 185
‘ Of hospitality, because the tempests’ force
‘ Brought him when bound for Troy to Crete and drove
‘ Out of his course beside the Maleæ,
‘ And in Amnisus placed him, where the cave
‘ Of Ilithyia is, a dang’rous port,
‘ And scarcely there did he escape the storms.

- ' Arriving at the city he forthwith 190
 ' Sought out Idomeneus, and claimed to be
 ' A dear and venerable host of his.
 ' 'Twas now the tenth or the eleventh morn
 ' Since with his crooked ships he sailed for Troy :
 ' Him I took home and entertained him well,
 ' Treating him kindly, for my house was rich. 195
 ' I gave to him and his attendant friends
 ' Meal which I gathered from the public stores,
 ' Dark wine, and beeves, to satisfy their mind.
 ' There for twelve days the noble Greeks remained :
 ' Strong Boreas drove them nor allowed to stand 200
 ' E'en on the shore ; some evil Deity
 ' Had raised it ; but upon the thirteenth day
 ' The wind subsided and away they sailed.'
 (He ceased, and many falsehoods told like truths. *T. Fal*
 Tears as she listened flowed ; her flesh dissolved :
 As in the lofty mountains wastes the snow, 205
 Which Eurus melts when Zephyr pours it down,
 So her fair cheeks were melted as she wept,
 Her spouse bewailing, who was sitting near.
 But though Ulysses pitied in his mind
 His weeping wife, his eyes as horn or steel 210
 Stood firm ; his tears he artfully concealed.
 When she in tearful wailing had indulged,
 She thus forthwith addressed him in reply :
 ' I think to put thee, stranger ! to the proof 215
 ' If truly, as thou say'st, thou hast received
 ' My husband with his brave friends in thy house.
 ' Tell me what clothes were round his body placed ;
 ' What kind of man he was, and what his friends.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said : 220
‘Lady! ’tis hard, when so much time has passed,
‘To say ; for now it is the twentieth year
‘Since he departing from my country went :
‘Still I will tell thee as my heart records.
‘Divine Ulysses had a purple cloak, 225
‘Fleecy and double ; on it there was fixed
‘A clasp of gold, with double rings in front.
‘It was embroidered ; in his paws, a dog,
‘Watching it panting, held a spotted fawn.
‘All used to wonder how, when formed of gold,
‘He strangled easily the fawn, the while 230
‘Eager to fly it quivered with its feet.
‘A shining cloak around his form I saw,
‘As though it were a slender onion’s rind ;
‘So soft it was, and shining like the sun,
‘And many were the women who admired. 235
‘Another thing I tell thee ; mark it well :
‘I know not if Ulysses when at home
‘These garments wore, or some one of his friends
‘Had giv’n them when in his swift ship he went,
‘Or some host haply ; for Ulysses was
‘Beloved by many ; few Greeks like him were. 240
‘A brazen sword and double cloak I gave,
‘Fair, purple, that enwrapped him all around,
‘And honourably sent him to his ship.
‘A herald little older than himself
‘Followed, and I will tell thee what he was : 245
‘Round-shouldered, dark-skinned, and with curly hair,
‘Eurybates his name ; Ulysses loved
‘Him above other friends, for he was wise.’

He spake and even more aroused her grief,
Knowing the clear signs which Ulysses told : 250
And, when with tearful wailing satisfied,
She with these words addressed him in reply :

‘ Now, stranger ! pitied though thou wert before,
‘ Thou shalt be dear and in my house revered.
‘ I gave the vests thou speakest of myself, 255
‘ Folding them in my chamber, and I placed
‘ The shining clasp to be his ornament.
‘ ’Twas then by evil fate Ulysses sailed
‘ To seek that bad Troy which should not be named.’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said : 260
‘ Lady ! Ulysses’ venerable wife !
‘ No longer waste thy beauteous form away,
‘ Nor mourning for thy husband melt thy mind.
‘ But yet I blame thee not ; for any wife
‘ Weeps for the husband she has lost, to whom, 265
‘ Married a virgin, she has children borne,
‘ Though to Ulysses far inferior,
‘ Of whom they say that he was like the Gods.
‘ But check thy grief and understand my word,
‘ For I will tell thee true, nor will conceal,
‘ That lately of Ulysses’ near return, 270
‘ In the Thesprotians’ fertile land alive,
‘ I’ve heard, and many costly things he brings,
‘ Courting the people ; but his much loved friends
‘ And hollow ship has on the dark sea lost,
‘ As he departed from Trinacria’s isle ;
‘ For Jove was angry with him, and the Sun, 275
‘ Because his oxen his companions slew ;
‘ And they all perished in the stormy sea ;

' But him the wave cast out upon the shore,
 ' On the ship's keel, in the Phœacians' land,
 ' Men who are very near the Gods, and they
 ' In their heart honoured him as if a God, 280
 ' Gave many gifts, and wished to send him home
 ' Unharm'd. Ulysses would have long ago
 ' Been here, but this seemed better to his mind,
 ' Over much land to pass and gifts collect ;
 ' For many means of gain Ulysses knew 285
 ' Above all mortals ; none with him could vie.
 ' This told me Pheidon, the Thesprotian king,
 ' And, pouring out libation in the house,
 ' Swore to me that the ship was launched, the crew
 ' Prepared to take him to his native land. 290
 ' Me first he sent off (for by chance a ship
 ' Of the Thesprotians to Dulichium
 ' In wheat abounding came,) and showed what wealth
 ' Ulysses had collected ; and it would
 ' To the tenth generation feed a man :
 ' Such costly treasures in the king's house lay. 295
 ' He said that he had to Dodona gone,
 ' To ask Jove's counsel from the high-branched oak,
 ' How he, long absent, to his native land
 ' Should openly or secretly return.
 ' So he is safe ; and since he now is near 300
 ' Will come, nor from his friends and native land
 ' Be absent long ; but I will plight an oath :
 ' Let Jupiter, the highest and the best
 ' Of Gods, now first be witness, and the hearth
 ' Of famed Ulysses unto which I come :
 ' All this shall be accomplished, as I say : 305

‘ In this same year Ulysses will return,
‘ When this month wanes, and when the next arrives.’

The wise Penelope replied and said :

‘ Would, stranger ! that thy word might be fulfilled !
 ‘ Soon shouldst thou know my friendship, and have
 gifts

310

'So num'rous that who met would give thee joy.

‘ But to my mind it seems that ’twill be thus :

'Ulysses will not to his home return,

‘Nor thou obtain an escort : in the house

‘Such rulers are ; not now as once o’er men

'Ulysses was, aye ! once indeed he was, 315

‘ To convoy and receive respected guests.

‘But, maidens ! bathe him ; place for him a bed,

‘Cushions and vestments and resplendent rugs,

'That warm he may the gold-throned morning reach.

' Wash and anoint him at the early dawn, 320

‘That, sitting near Telemachus, he may

‘ Within the palace think upon the feast ;

‘And woe-betide whoever of them grieves

'And harasses his mind ! no deed shall he,

' Though violently angry, here perform.

'For stranger! how wilt thou discern of me 325

'That other women I excel in thought

‘And prudence, shouldst thou, squalid and ill-clad,

‘Feast in the palace? men but short-lived are :

‘ Whoe’er is cruel and has cruel thoughts,

' On him all imprecate hereafter woes 330

'Alive, and all men scoff at him when dead.

‘ Whoe’er is noble and has noble thoughts,

' His wide-spread glory strangers bear abroad

‘To all mankind, and many call him good.’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said : 335

‘Lady ! Ulysses’ venerable wife !

‘Cloaks and fine blankets cumbrous are to me,

‘Since I departed from the snowy hills

‘Of Crete, embarking in a long-oared ship.

‘As I before through sleepless nights reposed, 340

‘I still will lie ; for many nights I lay

‘On a foul couch, and longed for fair-throned dawn.

‘Baths for my feet agree not with my mind ;

‘Nor shall there any woman touch my foot,

‘Of those who are the servants in the house ; 345

‘Unless some prudent aged dame there be,

‘One who as much has suffered as have I :

‘To her I grudge not that she touch my feet.’

The wise Penelope to him replied :

‘Dear stranger ! no man to my house so sage 350

‘Or welcome of all foreign guests has come ;

‘So eloquently all-wise words thou say’st.

‘I have an old dame, prudent in her mind,

‘Who nursed and brought up him, the wretched one,

‘And held him when his mother brought him forth : 355

‘She, though of little strength, shall wash thy feet.

‘Prudent Euryclea ! now rise and come

‘To wash the feet of one of equal age

‘With thine own lord ; perhaps Ulysses is

‘Such as is he in feet, and such in hands,

‘For in misfortune men grow quickly old.’ 360

She spake : the old dame covered with her hands
Her face, let hot tears fall, and sadly said :

‘Woe’s me, my child ! I helpless am for thee :

' Jove surely hates thee more than any one
 ' Who has a pious mind ; for none as thou 365
 ' Has ever burned to Jove the thunderer
 ' So many fat thighs or choice hecatombs
 ' As thou hast giv'n him, praying that thou reach
 ' Quiet old age, and rear thy noble son.
 ' Yet he return has taken quite away ;
 ' And so, perhaps, the maids of foreign hosts 370
 ' Scoff at him, when to some strange house he comes,
 ' As all those shameless women scoffed at thee,
 ' Shunning whose insolence and foul reproach
 ' Thou dost not suffer them to wash thy feet.
 ' Me not unwilling wise Penelope;
 ' The daughter of Icarius, commands : 375
 ' For the sake, therefore, of Penelope,
 ' And for thine own too, I will wash thy feet.
 ' My mind within me is perplexed by cares ;
 ' But come now, mark the word that I shall speak ;
 ' Hither have many wretched strangers come,
 ' But never have I seen one who as thou 380
 ' In form, voice, feet, was to Ulysses like.'

The wise Ulysses answered her, and said :
 ' Old dame ! as many as have seen us both
 ' So say, as thou with observation say'st,
 ' That to each other we great likeness bear.' 385

He spake ; the aged dame a cauldron took
 All shining bright in which to wash the feet.
 She poured in much cold water and therein
 She mingled warm. Ulysses on the hearth
 Sate down, and quickly to a dark place turned,
 For he bethought him in his mind, that she

Would find the scar, and so the truth appear. 390
Her master she approached and washed, and knew
At once the scar, which with white tusk the boar
Inflicted as he to Parnassus went
With his own mother's sire Autolycus
And with his sons, who other men surpassed 395
In theft and perjury ; (this Mercury
Gave him because he burned the welcome thighs
Of lambs, and kindly guarded him.)
To Ithaca's rich land Autolycus
Came, and his daughter's son found newly born. 400
Upon his knees Euryclea had laid
The child when he from supper ceased, and said :
' Autolycus ! thyself now find a name
' Which to thy daughter's dear son thou mayst give ;
' For he has been obtained by many pray'rs.'
To her Autolycus replied, and said : 405
' My son-in-law and daughter ! give the name
' I say : enraging many, I am come,
' Both men and women in the fertile earth ;
' Let then Ulysses be his name, and I,
' When he grown up shall to Parnassus come,
' His great maternal house where is my wealth, 410
' Some I will give and send him pleased away.'
That he might gifts bestow, Ulysses went :
Autolycus, and of Autolycus
The sons, with hands and kind words greeted him. 415
Amphithea his mother's mother clasped
And kissed Ulysses' head and two fair eyes.
Autolycus then bade his noble sons
Prepare a feast ; they, as he urged, obeyed,

And brought a male ox in, of five years old ; 420
They skinned, prepared it, and divided all,
Cut skilfully in joints and fixed on spits,
Roasted with care and parted into shares.
They thus all day, until the set of sun,
Feasted, nor lacked their mind the equal food. 425
But when the sun had set and darkness came,
They lay them down and took the gift of sleep.
When early rosy-fingered morn appeared,
They hasted to the chace, both dogs and they,
Sons of Autolycus ; and with them went
Divine Ulysses. To Parnassus' mount, 430
Lofty and clothed with wood, they came and soon
Climbed to the breezy heights : just then the sun
From deep fair-flowing ocean touched the fields.
The huntsmen to the valleys came, the dogs,
Eager to find the tracks, before them went. 435
The sons came after of Autolycus :
Divine Ulysses with them near the dogs
Came brandishing a long spear in his hands.
There lay a huge boar in a thicket deep,
Through which nor blew the force of watr'y winds, 440
Nor the sun struck when shining with its rays,
Nor did the shower penetrate ; so thick
It was ; and great the pile of leaves therein.
The sound of men's feet and of dogs came round,
As they went rushing on ; he from his lair, 445
With bristling crest while from his eyes flashed fire,
Stood near in front : Ulysses far the first,
Holding a long spear in his hand, rushed on
Eager to wound him ; but the boar struck first

Above his knee, and rushing, with his tusk 450
Obliquely tore much flesh nor reached the bone.
On the right shoulder then Ulysses struck
And wounded him ; the spear's point passed right
through,

And groaning in the dust he fell and died.
Of him the dear sons of Autolycus 455
Took care, and skilfully bound up the wound
Of the divine Ulysses ; by a charm
Staunched the black blood and bore him to their home.
Him, having healed him and rich gifts bestowed,
Autolycus rejoicing with his sons 460
Soon sent rejoicing to dear Ithaca.

His sire and venerable mother joyed
At his return, and many questions put
As to the wound he suffered : well he told
How that a boar with white tusk wounded him, 465
As, with the dear sons of Autolycus,
He to Parnassus' mount a-hunting went.

The old dame, taking in her hands laid flat
And wiping, recognised the wounded knee.
She let his foot drop ; in the cauldron fell
His leg ; the brass resounding on its side
Fell down ; the water on the ground was spilled. 470
Both joy and grief at once possessed her mind ;
Her eyes were filled with tears, her voice was choked.
Touching Ulysses on the beard she said :
' Surely thou art Ulysses, my dear child !
' Nor till I handled did I know my king.' 475

She, glancing at Penelope, desired
To tell her that her husband was within :

But she could neither see nor understand,
 Because Minerva turned her mind aside.
 With his right hand Ulysses seized her throat, 480
 And with the other drew her near, and said :
 ‘ Nurse ! dost thou wish to kill me ? thou who once
 ‘ At thine own breast didst nourish me thyself ?
 ‘ I, having suffered many sorrows, now
 ‘ Come to my country in the twentieth year :
 ‘ But since thou hast discovered me, and God
 ‘ Has put it in thy mind, O silence keep ! 485
 ‘ Nor let another in the palace hear :
 ‘ For thus I tell thee, and it shall be done :
 ‘ If the proud suitors God for me subdue,
 ‘ I will not spare thee, though my nurse, when I
 ‘ The other women in the house shall slay.’ 490

The wise Euryclea to him replied :

‘ My child ! what word has from thy lips escaped ?
 ‘ Thou know’st how firm and stedfast is my mind ;
 ‘ I’ll hold it as hard rock or steel might do.
 ‘ This too I tell thee, weigh it in thy mind : 495
 ‘ If the proud suitors God for thee subdue,
 ‘ I’ll tell thee of the women in the house,
 ‘ Who thee dishonour, and who guiltless are.’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

‘ But, nurse ! why point them out ? there is no need ;
 ‘ For I myself will each detect and know : 500
 ‘ But silence keep and trust it to the Gods.’

He spake : the old dame from the palace went
 To bring a foot-bath, for the first was spilled.
 When she had bathed and rubbed him o’er with oil, 505
 Nearer the fire Ulysses drew a seat

To warm himself, and hid the scar with rags.
 The wise Penelope a speech began :
 ‘ Stranger ! but little I will ask thee yet :
 ‘ ’Twill soon be time of soft repose for one 510
 ‘ Whom, though in trouble, sweet sleep overcomes.
 ‘ To me the God has given grief immense ;
 ‘ By day in groans and wailing I indulge,
 ‘ And works and hand-maids in the house o’erlook :
 ‘ But when night comes and bed receives us all, 515
 ‘ I lie upon my couch, and gath’ring cares
 ‘ Sharp on my heart distress me as I weep.
 ‘ As the dark nightingale, of Pandarus
 ‘ The child, sings sweetly in the new-come spring,
 ‘ And pours with frequent change her thrilling voice,
 ‘ Sitting among the thick leaves of the trees, 520
 ‘ Wailing her dear child Itylus, the son *Q. my.*
 ‘ Of Zethus, whom in ignorance she slew ;
 ‘ So here and there my mind is doubly urged,
 ‘ Either to stay here with my son and keep
 ‘ All safe, possessions, servants, lofty house, 525
 ‘ A husband’s couch respect and public fame,
 ‘ Or follow him who of the Greeks the best
 ‘ Woos me, and many spousal gifts bestows.
 ‘ My son, while yet a child and weak in mind, 530
 ‘ To wed and quit my husband’s house forbade :
 ‘ He now, grown up and come to man’s estate,
 ‘ Entreats me from the palace to depart,
 ‘ Vexed at the property the Greeks consume.
 ‘ But come, explain and listen to a dream. 535
 ‘ Forth from the water twenty geese ate wheat
 ‘ Within my house, which I rejoiced to see :

‘ A mighty eagle with a crooked beak
‘ Came from a mountain, and broke all their necks
‘ And slew them ; they in heaps throughout the house
‘ Were strewn ; but in the air divine he soared. 540
‘ I wept and wailed, although ’twas in a dream.
‘ The fair-haired Grecian women round me came,
‘ Bemoaning that the eagle killed my geese ;
‘ But he came down and on the gable sate,
‘ And checked me with a mortal voice and said : 545
‘ “ Take courage, child of famed Icarius !
‘ “ No dream this, but a sign to be fulfilled.
‘ “ The suitors are the geese, the eagle I ;
‘ “ A bird once, now thy husband I am come,
‘ “ And to the suitors wretched fate will bring.” 550
‘ So spake he, and sweet sleep deserted me,
‘ And looking through the house I saw the geese
‘ In the trough eating, as before, the wheat.’

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

‘ Lady ! it is not possible to turn 555
‘ The dream, or to expound it otherwise,
‘ Because Ulysses said to thee himself
‘ That it would be accomplished. Death is shewn
‘ To all the suitors, nor will one escape.’

The wise Penelope replied and said :

‘ Stranger ! ’ tis true that dreams uncertain are, 560
‘ Hard to interpret, nor are all fulfilled.
‘ There are two gates of unsubstantial dreams ;
‘ These made of bone and those of ivory.
‘ Those of them which come through sawn ivory
‘ Mislead, and bring words not to be fulfilled ; 565
‘ But these that through the polished horn proceed,

' When any mortal sees them, bring the truth.
 ' But my dread dream I deem not thence to come ;
 ' Yet 'twould be welcome to my son and me.
 ' Another thing I tell thee, weigh it well : 570
 ' This is the hateful morning which will take
 ' Me from Ulysses' house ; for I propose
 ' A contest, axes which he used to place
 ' In order in his house, like stays of oak,
 ' Twelve of them altogether ; far apart
 ' He stood and shot an arrow through them all. 575
 ' This contest to the suitors I propose :
 ' Whoever easily shall stretch the bow,
 ' And through twelve axes shall an arrow shoot,
 ' Him I will follow and will quit the house,
 ' Fair, rich, to which I when a virgin came, 580
 ' And shall, I think, remember in a dream.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :

' Respected lady ! of Laertes' son
 ' Ulysses' wife ! defer not to propose
 ' This contest in the house ; for hither will
 ' The wise Ulysses come, before those men 585
 ' Handling the polished bow shall stretch the string,
 ' And shoot an arrow through the rings of steel.'

The wise Penelope again replied :

' If, stranger ! sitting by me in the house,
 ' Thou wouldst delight me, sleep should not be poured
 ' Upon my eyes ; but 'tis not fit that men 590
 ' Should always sleepless bē : immortals gave
 ' This portion to all mortals upon earth.
 ' Now to my upper chamber I will go,
 ' And lie upon the bed, made sad for me, 595

'Ever besprinkled with my tears, since when
 'To see that bad Troy which should not be named
 'Ulysses went, and there will lay me down ;
 'But lie thou in the house, and strew thy bed
 'Upon the ground, or let them place a couch.'

Thus speaking to the shining upper room 600
 She went, but not alone, for with her went
 The handmaids ; but, when to the upper rooms
 She with her women-servants came, she there
 Wept for her spouse Ulysses, till sweet sleep
 Blue-eyed Minerva on her eye-lids shed.

BOOK XX.

DIVINE Ulysses in the hall remained :
 An undressed ox-hide on the ground he spread,
 And fleeces of the sheep the Greeks had slain.
 Euronyme threw over him a cloak
 As he reposed : Ulysses in his mind
 Against the suitors meditating ills 5
 Lay there awake : the women from the house,
 Who with the suitors had intrigued before,
 Laughing and sporting with each other went.
 His wrath within his breast was roused, and much
 He meditated in his mind and thought 10
 Whether to rush and cause the death of each,
 Or with the suitors for the last last time
 Let them consort : his heart within him growled,

As a hound, busied with her tender whelps,
Growls at a stranger and desires to fight ; 15
So wond'ring at their bad deeds growled his heart.
Smiting his breast he thus his heart rebuked :
' Bear up, my heart ! thou hast borne worse before,
' In that day when the Cyclops, unrestrained
' In violence, my brave companions ate.
' Thou didst endure it, till thy stratagem 20
' Led thee expecting death from out the cave.'

He spake, his heart rebuking in his breast :
His heart, as by a cable bound, stood firm,
Enduring still ; from side to side he rolled,
As when one turns before a blazing fire 25
From side to side a paunch, with fat and blood
Replete, and wishes it were roasted soon ;
So here and there he rolled, reflecting how
He on the shameless suitors might lay hands,
Alone on many. Near, Minerva came 30
Down from the sky, a woman in her form,
And standing o'er his head addressed him thus :
' Why wakest thou ? ill fated above all !
' This is thine house, thy wife is here and son,
' Whom any one would wish to be his child.' 35

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :
' Aye, Goddess ! all this thou hast rightly said ;
' But in my breast my mind deliberates
' How on the shameless suitors I shall lay
' My hands alone, while many they within. 40
' This I consider too, a greater thing,
' How, if I slay them by Jove's help and thine,
' Shall I escape ? I pray thee think on this.'

Minerva, blue-eyed Goddess, thus replied :

‘ Hard man ! and yet there are who would obey 45
‘ E’en a worse friend, one mortal and unskilled
‘ In so great counsels : I a Goddess am,
‘ And guide thee constantly in many toils.
‘ I tell thee plainly that, if fifty troops
‘ Of speaking men should stand around us two, 50
‘ Eager to slay us in the fight of Mars,
‘ Their beeves and fat sheep thou shouldst drive away.
‘ Let sleep come over thee ; to watch all night
‘ Awake is grief ; from ills thou shalt escape.’

She spake, and sleep upon his eyelids poured ;
And she, divine one, to Olympus went, 55
While sleep was seizing him, which of the mind
Relieves the cares, and sets the members free.
His wife, who knew good counsels, was awake,
And, in her soft couch sitting up, she wept.
When she had satisfied her mind with tears,
Woman divine, she to Diana prayed : 60
‘ Diana ! honoured Goddess ! child of Jove !
‘ O that thou wouldst an arrow in my breast
‘ Strike even now, and take my life away !
‘ Or that a tempest, hurrying me off,
‘ Would come and bear me o’er the gloomy ways,
‘ And cast me in back-flowing Ocean’s waves : 65
‘ As once the tempest bore the daughters off
‘ Of Pandarus ; of whom the Gods had slain
‘ The parents ; they within the house were left
‘ Orphans, but heav’nly Venus brought them up
‘ With curd, sweet honey, and delicious wine.
‘ To them above all women Juno gave 70

- ‘Beauty and sense, and chaste Diana form ;
 ‘Minerva taught them beauteous works to do.
 ‘When Venus to the high Olympus went,
 ‘To ask a happy marriage for the girls
 ‘From thund’ring Jove, for of all mortal men 75
 ‘The fortune and misfortune well he knows.
 ‘The Harpies meanwhile snatched the girls away,
 ‘And made them the detested Furies serve.
 ‘May the Olympian Gods so me destroy,
 ‘Or may fair-haired Diana strike me down, 80
 ‘That, with Ulysses still before mine eyes,
 ‘I may go underneath the hateful earth,
 ‘Nor please a man to him inferior !
 ‘Yet even this may be endured, when one
 ‘Weeps all the day afflicted in his heart
 ‘If sleep comes over him at night, for then 85
 ‘He all forgets, the evil and the good,
 ‘As soon as sleep his eyelids covers o’er ;
 ‘But God upon me sends distressful dreams :
 ‘This night one like him near me lay, one such
 ‘As with the army went ; my heart rejoiced ;
 ‘No dream I thought it, but a vision true.’ 90

So spake she : gold-throned morning quickly came.
 Divine Ulysses heard her as she wept,
 And was perplexed ; he fancied in his mind
 She knew him and was standing at his head.
 Gath’ring the cloak and skins on which he slept, 95
 He laid them on a seat within the house ;
 The ox-hide took and placed it out of doors,
 And lifting up his hands he prayed to Jove :
 ‘O father Jove ! if ye have willingly

' Brought me across both dry and wat'ry ways
 ' To my own country, after much distress,
 ' Let some one of the men who are awake 100
 ' An omen speak to me within, and let
 ' Another sign appear from Jove without.'

He spake in pray'r ; and Jove the counsellor
 Heard him and thundered from Olympus bright,
 From out the clouds on high ; Ulysses joyed.
 Near him a woman, working at a mill, 105
 Uttered an omen from the house ; the mills
 Which to the people's chief belonged were there ;
 In all twelve women were at work with these,
 Preparing meal and flour, the life of men ;
 The others slept when they had ground the wheat ;
 She, feeblest of them, had not ceased ; the mill 110
 She stopped and spake an omen for the king :

' O father Jove ! who rulest Gods and men,
 ' Loud hast thou thundered from the starry sky,
 ' Nor is there cloud ; thou shew'st a sign to some :
 ' Perform for wretched me the word I speak : 115
 ' Grant that the suitors may on this day take
 ' Their last last banquet in Ulysses' house,
 ' For they with grievous weariness have loosed
 ' My knees in grinding ; be this feast their last !'

She spake : divine Ulysses was rejoiced 120
 At th' omen and Jove's thunder ; for he thought
 On the transgressors he should be avenged.

The other maidens, in Ulysses' house
 Assembling, kindled on the hearth a fire.
 Telemachus, the godlike man, arose 124
 From off his couch ; his garments donned, and placed

A sharp sword o'er his shoulders ; sandals fair
Bound on his shining feet ; a strong spear took
With sharp brass pointed ; on the threshold stood,
And with these words addressed Euryclea :

' Have ye, dear nurse ! with honour entertained

' The stranger in the house with bed and food ?

' Or does he lie neglected, as it haps ?

130

' For such my mother, though she prudent be,

' That rashly one of language-speaking men

' She treats with honour, though inferior ;

' But sends a better man disgraced away.'

The wise Euryclea to him replied :

' My child ! thou shouldst not blame a blameless one :

' He sate and drank as much wine as he wished, 135

' And said he had no appetite for bread ;

' For this she asked him. When of bed and sleep

' He thought, she bade the handmaids strew a couch ;

' But he, as one in woe and evil fate, 140

' Would not consent to sleep upon a bed

' And rugs, but on an undressed ox's hide

' And skins of sheep within the portico

' He lay, and we threw over him a cloak.'

She spake : Telemachus went from the house,

Holding a spear ; the swift dogs followed him, 145

And to the forum to the well-greaved Greeks

He went. Euryclea divine, the child

Of Ops Peisenor's son, the maids addressed :

' Assemble ye ! some busy sweep the house

' And sprinkle it, and on the well-made thrones

' Lay purple carpets ; others of you wipe 150

' With sponges all the tables, cleanse the cups,

‘ And the wrought double goblets ; others go
 ‘ For water to the fountain, bring it quick ;
 ‘ For from the house the suitors will not long
 ‘ Be absent, but will come again at dawn : 155
 ‘ There is for all of-them a festival.’

She spake and they all hearkened and obeyed.
 To the dark fountain twenty of them went,
 The rest worked skilfully within the house.
 The servants of the Grecians came ; some cleft 160
 The dry wood well and skilfully ; the maids
 Came from the fountain ; then the swineherd came,
 Bringing three swine, the best among them all ;
 These he to pasture in the fair courts left,
 And with mild words Ulysses thus addressed : 165
 ‘ Do the Greeks, stranger ! now respect thee more,
 ‘ Or in the house ill treat thee as they did ?’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :
 ‘ Would that the Gods, Eumæus ! would revenge
 ‘ Their outrage, while they insolently plan
 ‘ Disgraceful actions in another’s house, 170
 ‘ And have not e’en a particle of shame.’

So spake they to each other : then approached
 Melanthius, the keeper of the goats,
 Bringing the goats which in the herd excelled,
 The suitors’ feast, (two goat-herds followed him) 175
 And these he tied beneath the sounding porch,
 And to Ulysses spake with scoffing words :
 ‘ Stranger ! dost still cause trouble in the house,
 ‘ Begging of men, nor out of doors wilt go ?
 ‘ I think we shall not settle our dispute 180
 ‘ Before we taste each other’s hands ; thou begg’st

‘Unfairly ; there are other feasts of Greeks.’

He spake : the wise Ulysses answered not,
But silent shook his head devising woes.

Philæti^{us} a chief of men came third, 185

Leading a barren heifer and fat goats,

The suitors’ feast : (these ferry-men had brought,
Who men, whoever to them comes, convey ;)

And these he tied beneath the sounding porch,
And standing near the swineherd questioned him : 190

‘Who, swineherd ! is the stranger, lately come

‘To our abode ? of what men does he boast

‘To be ? what race ? and what his father-land ?

‘Ill-fated, he is like a king in form ;

‘But men who wander much the Gods afflict, 195

‘Since woes they destine even unto kings.’

He spake, and with his right hand, standing near,
A welcome gave and spoke these wingèd words :

‘Hail, rev’rend stranger ! henceforth be success

‘To thee, though now by many ills oppress. 200

‘O father Jove ! no God is more than thou

‘Destructive ; thou no pity hast for men,

‘Although thou hast thyself begotten them,

‘But dost with woes and sorrows mix them up.

‘How when I think I sweat ; my eyes are filled

‘With tears, when I Ulysses call to mind, 205

‘And think that he too wears such rags as these,

‘And wanders among men, if yet he lives

‘And sees the sun-light ; but if he is dead

‘In Pluto’s house, O for Ulysses woe !

‘That noble man, who placed me in the land

‘Of Cephallenia, when little still, 210

‘Over his kine ; they now are numberless,
 ‘Nor could in any other way the race
 ‘Of a man’s broad-browed oxen more increase.
 ‘Now others bid me bring them for themselves
 ‘To eat, nor heed they in the house his son,
 ‘Nor tremble at the vengeance of the Gods ;
 ‘For eagerly they wish to share the goods 215
 ‘Of the long-absent king among themselves.
 ‘But in my breast my mind this oft revolves :
 ‘’Tis surely wicked while the son yet lives
 ‘To go to others’ land, to stranger men,
 ‘And take their beeves ; but ’tis more shocking still 220
 ‘That o’er another’s beeves, remaining here,
 ‘I sit and suffer woes ; and long ago
 ‘I to some other proud king would have fled,
 ‘(For this is past endurance) but I think
 ‘Of him unhappy, should he come and make
 ‘Dispersion of the suitors in the house.’ 225

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘Since neither to a base nor foolish man,
 ‘Herdsman ! thou seemest like, and I myself
 ‘Well know that prudence reaches to thy mind,
 ‘I tell thee, and besides a mighty oath
 ‘Will swear ; of Gods let Jove be witness first, 230
 ‘The hospitable table and the hearth
 ‘Of famed Ulysses unto which I come !
 ‘While thou art here Ulysses shall come home,
 ‘And, if thou wilt, with thine eyes thou shalt see
 ‘The suitors slaughtered who are masters here.’

To him the herdsman of the oxen said : 235

‘May, stranger ! Saturn’s son this word perform !

‘What strength and hands attend me thou shouldst know.’

Eumæus so made pray’r to all the Gods,
That to his house Ulysses might return.
Such words they thus to one another spoke : 240

The suitors then were for Telemachus
Preparing death and fate ; but on their left
A bird, a lofty-soaring eagle, came,
And in his talons held a timid dove.

Amphinomus harangued them thus and said :
‘My friends ! the slaughter of Telemachus, 245
‘Our plan, will fail, but let us mind the feast.’

So spake Amphinomus : his words pleased well ;
And, going to divine Ulysses’ house,
They laid their cloaks upon the seats and thrones,
And sacrificed large sheep and fatted goats, 250
Swine, and from out the herd a cow they slew ;
Roasted and shared the entrails, and mixed wine
In bowls ; the swineherd served it out in cups.

Philœtius, the chief of men, shared bread
In basket fair ; Melantheus poured out wine ; 255
And on the feast prepared their hands they threw.

Telemachus, reflecting what was best,
Within the well-built house Ulysses placed
By the stone threshold ; put a lowly seat,
And a small table ; of the entrails laid
A portion by him ; in a golden cup
Poured wine, and thus a speech to him addressed : 260

‘Sit here now, drinking wine among the men :
‘I will myself ward off from thee the scoffs
‘And hands of all the suitors ; for this house

‘Not public is but of Ulysses ; he
‘For me acquired it and, ye suitors ! keep 265
‘Your minds from chiding and from violence,
‘That no strife and contention may arise.’

He spake : they all, with teeth fixed in their lips, ✓
Admired what boldly said Telemachus.

Then said Antinous, Eupheithes’ son : 270

‘Stern though it be, let us, ye Greeks ! submit
‘To this speech of Telemachus ; he speaks
‘To us with threats ; Jove, Saturn’s son,
‘Has not allowed it, or we should ere this
‘Have checked him, though sharp orator he be.’

So spake Antinous : he heeded not 275

His words. The heralds through the city then
Were bringing the Gods’ sacred hecatomb :
The long-haired Grecians in assembly met
Beneath far-darting Phœbus’ shady grove.

When they the flesh had eaten and drawn off,
Dividing shares they ate the noble feast. 280

Those who were serving by Ulysses placed
A share as great as they themselves obtained ;
So bade Ulysses’ son Telemachus.

Minerva from their grievous insolence
Did not permit the suitors to refrain, 285

That rage might more come on Ulysses’ mind.

Among the suitors was a man well skilled
In lawless deeds ; Ctesippus was his name ;
He dwelt in Samos ; trusting in his wealth

Immense, the wife he of Ulysses wooed, 290

Long absent ; he the suitors thus addressed :

‘Hear me, ye noble suitors ! while I speak :

‘ The stranger long has had an equal share,
 ‘ As it is fit ; for ’tis not fair nor just
 ‘ To wrong whoever to this house may come, 295
 ‘ Guests of Telemachus : I too will give
 ‘ Some hospitality, that so he may
 ‘ Himself a gift make to the bathing-man,
 ‘ Or other servant in Ulysses’ house.’

He spake, and with his strong hand seizing threw
 An ox-foot, lying in a basket near : 300

Ulysses slightly moved his head aside
 And shunned it, but with a sardonic smile
 Laughed inwardly ; it struck the well-built wall :
 Telemachus rebuked Ctesippus thus :

‘ Ctesippus ! better surely was thy thought ;
 ‘ Thou didst not hit the stranger, for he shunned 305
 ‘ The blow ; but I would otherwise have struck
 ‘ Thee in the middle with a pointed spear :
 ‘ Instead of marriage then thy father would
 ‘ Have been employed about thy burial.

‘ Let none then in the house to me display
 ‘ Unseemly deeds ; for now I feel and know
 ‘ The difference, the evil and the good : 310

‘ I was a child before. We have endured
 ‘ To see our sheep slain and our wine and bread
 ‘ Consumed ; for one man scarce can many check :
 ‘ But no more in your malice evil do.

‘ If ye now wish to kill me with the sword, 315

‘ I wish it too ; for ’twould be better far
 ‘ To die than always see these wicked deeds ;
 ‘ Strangers insulted, men indecently
 ‘ Dragging the female servants through the house.’

He spake : they all in silence sate ; at last 320
Thus Agelaus spoke, Damastor's son :
' My friends ! none would with contradicting words
' Find fault with that which has been justly said.
' Neither the stranger any more insult,
' Nor any servant in Ulysses' house. 325
' I would a mild word to Telemachus
' And to his mother say, if both their hearts
' It pleased : as long as in your breasts your mind
' Hoped that the wise Ulysses would come home,
' So long there was no blame that you should wait 330
' And check the suitors ; for 'twere better so
' That to his house Ulysses should return.
' This now is clear : he will return no more.
' Come then, and sitting by thy mother bid
' That she should marry whosoe'er is best,
' And gives most presents ; and that thou with joy 335
' Eating and drinking should thy father's goods
' Control, and she another's house direct.'

The wise Telemachus replied and said :
' I swear by Jove and by my father's woes,
' Who, Agelaus ! far from Ithaca
' Has either died or been a wanderer, 340
' My mother's marriage I do not obstruct,
' But bid her wed whome'er she will, and I
' Great gifts upon her will besides bestow :
' But from the house to thrust her with harsh words
' Against her will I shame ; this God forbid !'

Thus spake Telemachus : Minerva then 345
Laughter unquenched among the suitors roused,
And set their thoughts a-wand'ring ; but they laughed

With cheeks that seemed as those of other men ;
 The flesh still wet with blood they ate ; their eyes
 Were filled with tears, their minds foreboded woe.

X Them godlike Theoclymenus addressed : 350

‘ O wretched men ! what evils suffer ye ?

‘ Your heads, your faces, and your knees beneath

‘ Are wrapped in night ; your sobs are bursting forth ;

‘ Your cheeks are wet with tears ; the beauteous walls

‘ And columns fair are dropping down with blood ;

✓ ‘ Full is the porch and full the hall with ghosts 355

‘ Hasting in gloom to Erebus ; the sun

‘ Falls from the sky ; foul darkness creeps around.’

He spake ; they all laughed mirthfully ; then said
 Eurymachus, the son of Polybus :

‘ The guest just come from other lands is mad : 360

‘ Quick ! drive him to the forum out of doors,

‘ Ye youths ! things here he likens to the night.’

To him thus Theoclymenus replied :

‘ Eurymachus ! no guides I ask of thee,

✓ ‘ For I have eyes and ears and both my feet, 365

‘ And in my breast no unbecoming mind :

‘ With these then I will from the doors depart,

‘ For evil coming on you I descry,

‘ Which none of all you suitors shall escape

‘ Nor shun, who in divine Ulysses’ house,

‘ Insulting men, atrocious deeds contrive.’ 370

He spake, and from the well-built house went forth,
 And to Piræus came who welcomed him.

The suitors, looking at each other, chafed

Telemachus by laughing at the guests ;

And thus said some one of the haughty youths : 375

'Telemachus! none more unfortunate
 'In guests than thou; a begging vagabond
 'Thou hast, one craving bread and wine, unskilled
 'In work and strength, a cumb'rer of the ground;
 'Another too gets up to prophesy. 380
 'If thou wouldst trust me this would better be;
 'Let us the strangers in a well-benched ship
 'Embark and send to the Sicilians,
 'Whence one a fair price would for them receive.'

The suitors spake: he heeded not their words,
 But silent eyed his father, waiting still 385
 Till he the shameless suitors should attack.
 The wise Penelope, Icarius' child,
 Placing a beauteous seat in front, had heard
 The words that each man in the palace spake.
 With laughter they prepared a pleasant feast 390
 And gratifying, for they much had slain;
 But no feast could less gratifying be
 Than what the Goddess and the valiant man
 Would make for them who first foul deeds contrived.

BOOK XXI.

MINERVA, blue-eyed Goddess, gave the thought
 To wise Penelope, Icarius' child,
 To place the bow and grey-hued steel before
 The suitors in Ulysses' house, to be
 A contest and the origin of death.

getting ready for the contest

She climbed the lofty staircase of her house, 5
X And in her plump hand took a well-bent key,
Fair, brazen, with a shaft of ivory.
To the remotest chamber with her maids
She hasted ; there the treasures of the king,
Z Brass, gold, and much-wrought steel, were stored away.
The bow unstrung, the quiver to receive 10
The arrows, lay there : many grievous shafts
Were in it, presents which a stranger gave,
Who had in Sparta met him, Iphitus,
The son of Eurytus, one like the Gods.
They in Messênè with each other met, 15
Within the house of brave Orsilochus.
Ulysses came to claim a debt which all
The people owed ; for the Messenians
From Ithaca had ta'en three hundred sheep,
And shepherds with them, in their well-benched ships.
For them Ulysses, though a boy he was, 20
On public service a long journey went :
His father sent him and the senators.
But Iphitus to seek his horses went,
Which had been lost, twelve mares, and with them were
Laborious mules ; these were his death and fate.
When to the valiant son of Jove he came, 25
The hero Hercules in great deeds skilled,
He in his own house slew him, though his guest ;
Hard man ! who nor the vengeance of the Gods
Respected, nor the table which he spread,
But slew him afterwards, and kept himself
The solid-footed horses in the house. 30
He met Ulysses when in search of these,

And a bow gave him which great Eurytus
 Had borne of yore, who in his lofty house
 Had, when he died, bequeathed it to his son.
 To him Ulysses gave a sword and spear,
 Beginning of kind hospitality :

35

But no acquaintance at each other's board
 Had they, for Jove's son first slew Iphitus,
 The son of Eurytus, one like the Gods :
 He gave the bow ; Ulysses took it not
 When in the black ships to the war he went ;
 Of his dear friend memorial it lay
 At home ; he bore it in his own domain.

40

When she, divine one, to the chamber came
 And reached the oaken threshold (which before
 A carpenter had polished skilfully,
 And with a plumb-line straightened, *geometrical* pillars fixed
 Thereon, and put upon it shining doors,)

45

The thong she quickly from the ring unloosed,
 Put in the key, and lifted up the bolts
 Pushing in front ; they sounded as a bull
 At pasture ; so resounded the fair doors
 Struck by the key, and quick they open flew.

50

Upon the lofty floor she went, where stood
 The chest in which the fragrant garments lay :
 Reaching, she took the bow from off the peg,
 With the bright bow-case which encircled it,
 And sitting there she placed it on her knees,
 And loudly wailing took the king's bow out.

55

When she in tearful sorrow had indulged,
 To the proud suitors in the house she went,
 In her hand carrying the bow unstrung,

And quiver where were many grievous shafts. 60
With her the hand-maids brought a chest where lay
Iron and brass, the prizes of the king.

When she, divine one, to the suitors came,
She, by a column of the well-wrought roof,
Stood with a shining kerchief o'er her cheeks : 65

[On either side a chaste hand-maiden stood]
And to the suitors thus a speech addressed :

‘ Hear, noble suitors ! who distress this house,
‘ And always eat and drink unceasingly
‘ The substance of my husband, absent long, 70
‘ Nor other pretext have for your cabal
‘ Except to marry and make me your wife.

‘ Come, suitors ! since this contest is proposed ;
‘ For I will place divine Ulysses’ bow :

‘ Whoe’er most easily the bow shall stretch, 75
‘ And through twelve axes shall an arrow shoot,
‘ Him I will follow, and will quit the house,
‘ Fair, rich, to which I when a virgin came,
‘ And shall remember though but in a dream.’

She spake, and to Eumæus gave command, 80
Swineherd divine, to place the bow and steel
Before the suitors : these Eumæus took,

And weeping laid them down ; the herdsman too
Wept when he saw his royal master’s bow.

Antinous rebuked them and addressed :

‘ Ye foolish country-men ! ye wretched pair ! 85
‘ Who think on things which are but of the day ;
‘ Why weep ye, and excite a woman’s mind
‘ Within her breast, to whom it otherwise
‘ Is sad, for she has lost her husband dear ?

‘ Sit and in silence feast, or out of doors
 ‘ Go weep ye, and the bow and arrows here, 90
 ‘ A harmless contest for the suitors, leave.
 ‘ The polished bow they will not, as I think,
 ‘ Stretch easily, for not a man there is
 ‘ Among them all such as Ulysses was ;
 ‘ I, when a child, saw and remember him.’ 95

He spake, but in his breast he hoped to stretch
 The string, and send an arrow through the steel :
 But he was doomed to be the first to taste
 The arrow from the brave Ulysses’ hands,
 Whom he himself had, sitting in the house,
 Dishonoured, and encouraged all his friends. 100
 Then spoke the sacred prince Telemachus :
 ‘ Woe’s me ! full surely Jove, of Saturn son,
 ‘ Has made me foolish : my dear mother says,
 ‘ Wise as she is, that she some other man
 ‘ Will follow and desert this house, while I
 ‘ Laugh, and with foolish mind enjoy myself. 105
 ‘ Come, suitors ! since this contest is proposed,
 ‘ Not such a woman in the Grecian land
 ‘ In Pylos, Argos, or Mycēnè is,
 ‘ [In Ithaca or in Epirus dark]
 ‘ That well ye know : my mother need I praise ? 110
 ‘ But come, with no pretence retreat, nor put
 ‘ The stretching of the bow long time aside,
 ‘ That we may see : I too would try the bow,
 ‘ If I could stretch it, and shoot through the steel.
 ‘ My honoured mother should not, to my grief, 115
 ‘ Leave with another man this house, while I
 ‘ Am left behind, now able as I am

‘To gain the beauteous prizes of my sire.’

He spake, and rising from his shoulders threw
His purple cloak, and laid his sword aside.

First he arranged and straightened with a rule 120

The axes, digging one long trench for all,
And stamped the earth in round ; astonishment

Seized all, when they beheld how orderly

He placed them, though he had not seen before.

He on the threshold stood, and tried the bow ;

Eager to draw, he strained it thrice, and thrice 125

Relaxed his force, though hoping in his mind

To stretch the bow and through the steel rings shoot :

And at the fourth attempt he would have stretched

And drawn it, but Ulysses by a sign

Deterred and checked him in his eagerness.

Then spake Telemachus of sacred strength : 130

‘Alas ! hereafter I shall either be

‘Mean and without strength, or I am too young

‘Nor trust yet in my hands to drive away

‘A man when any one provokes me first.

‘Ye who in strength excel me ! come and try

‘The bow ; the contest let us terminate.’ 135

He spake, and from him put upon the ground,

Against the close-joined polished doors, the bow,

And the swift weapon on its fair tip reared,

And sate upon the throne from whence he rose.

Then spake Antinous, Eupeithes’ son, 140

‘Rise up, my friends ! in order from the right,

‘Beginning from the place where one pours wine.’

So spake Antinous : his word pleased all ;

And first Leiōdes, Onops’ son, arose,

Who was their soothsayer and always sate 145

The most remote beside the beauteous bowl :

Hateful to him alone was violence,

And he with all the suitors was enraged.

He first then took the bow and arrow swift,

Upon the threshold stood, and tried the bow,

Nor stretched it, for his unworn, tender hands 150

He wearied first ; and to the suitors said :

‘ I stretch it not, but let another try.

‘ My friends ! this bow will many chieftains strip

‘ Of mind and soul ; ’tis better they should die

‘ Than live and lose the prize for which we all 155

‘ Are here assembled, waiting all our days.

‘ Each one indeed now hopes and meditates

‘ To wed Penelope, Ulysses’ wife ;

‘ But when he shall have seen and tried the bow

‘ Some other of the well-robed Grecian dames 160

‘ Let him then woo and court with gifts ; let her

‘ Marry who gives her most and comes by fate.’

He spake, and from him put upon the ground

The bow, against the close-joined polished doors,

And the swift weapon on its fair tip reared, 165

And sate upon the throne from whence he rose.

Antinous rebuked him thus, and said :

‘ What word, Leiōdes ! has escaped thy lips,

‘ Dreadful and sad (I hear, and am enraged)

‘ That this bow surely shall deprive the chiefs 170

‘ Of mind and soul, because thou canst not shoot ?

‘ Thy venerable mother bore thee not

‘ With bow and arrows to an archer be ;

‘ But other suitors soon will stretch the bow.’

He spake, and ordered thus Melanthius, 175
The goat-herd : ‘ Go, Melanthius ! and light
‘ A fire ; a great seat place, and skins thereon ;
‘ Bring a large ball of tallow from within,
‘ That we young men may warm it, and the bow
‘ Besmearing try it, and the contest end.’ 180

He spake : Melanthius with speed the fire
Lighted, and placed a seat and skins thereon ;
Brought a large ball of tallow from within,
With which the young men warmed and tried the bow,
But could not stretch it ; much they wanted strength.
Antinous still and Eurymachus 185

Divine persisted, of the suitors chief,
And they in vigour were by far the best.
Forth from the house the two in company,
Herdsman and swineherd of Ulysses, went,
And after them Ulysses went himself. 190

When they were now outside the courts and hall,
With honeyed words addressing them he said :
‘ Herdsman ! and swineherd ! shall I hide or tell
‘ Some news ? my mind induces me to speak :
‘ Would ye be men to give Ulysses aid, 195
‘ If he from somewhere on a sudden came,
‘ And some God brought him hither ? whom would ye
‘ Assist ? the suitors or Ulysses ? speak,
‘ According as your heart and mind command.’

To him the herdsman of the kine replied :
‘ O father Jove ! mayst thou my wish perform, 200
‘ That he may come, and him the God conduct !
‘ What hands and strength attend me thou shouldst
know.’

Eumæus so made pray'r to all the Gods,
 That to his house Ulysses might return.
 When the true feeling of the men he knew, 205
 He with these words replying to them said :
 ' Here then am I myself within the house :
 ' After much labour in the twentieth year
 ' To my paternal country I am come.
 ' I know that I come welcome to you both
 ' Alone of all the servants ; of the rest 210
 ' Not one I heard who prayed for my return.
 ' To you what shall be I will truly tell :
 ' If the proud suitors God to me subdue,
 ' I will bring wives for both of you, and wealth
 ' Bestow, and well-built houses near my own ; 215
 ' Thenceforward ye of my Telemachus
 ' Shall the companions and the brothers be.
 ' But come, and I will other plain proof shew,
 ' That ye may know me well and be convinced,
 ' The wound which once with his white tusk a boar
 ' Inflicted when I to Parnassus went
 ' A-hunting, with Autolycus's sons.' 220

He spake, and from the great scar drew the rags :
 They, when they saw and all well understood,
 Wept and round wise Ulysses threw their hands,
 And kissed his head and shoulders lovingly ;
 And so Ulysses kissed their heads and hands. 225
 And while they wept the sun's light would have set,
 Had not Ulysses checked them and addressed :
 ' Cease from your tears and groans, lest from the house
 ' One come and see and tell of it within.
 ' Go in successively, not all at once, 230

‘I first, ye next. Let this a signal be ;
 ‘The rest, all those who noble suitors are,
 ‘The bow and quiver will deny to me ;
 ‘But thou, divine Eumæus ! bring the bow
 ‘Across the house, and place it in my hands,
 ‘And bid the women lock their chamber-doors, 235
 ‘And, if one hear a groan or noise of men
 ‘Within our courts, not from the door to stir,
 ‘But there in silence at their work remain.
 ‘To thee, divine Philœtius ! I give 240
 ‘The court-yard gates in charge, that with a key
 ‘Thou lock and quickly put a chain thereon.’

He spoke and went the well-built house within,
 And sate upon the seat from whence he rose :
 In the two servants of Ulysses went.
 Eurymachus was handling now the bow, 245
 Warming it here and there before the flame,
 Yet could not stretch, and much his heart was
 grieved.

Then sore distressed he spoke this word, and said :
 ‘Alas ! there sorrow is for me and all :
 ‘It is not for the marriage that I grieve 250
 ‘So much, however vexed I be ; there are
 ‘Many more Grecian women, those who dwell
 ‘In sea-girt Ithaca and other towns ;
 ‘But that we are in strength inferior
 ‘To the divine Ulysses, nor can stretch
 ‘The bow ; a shame for future men to hear.’ 255

Antinous, Eupèithes’ son, replied :
 ‘Eurymachus ! not so : thou know’st thyself ;
 ‘A holy feast in honour of the God

‘Is kept in public : who can stretch the bow ?
‘Put it down quietly ; let us permit
‘The axes too to stand, for none, I think, 260
‘Will move them, entering Ulysses’ house.
‘But come, let him who pours the wine with cups
‘Make offerings, that we, when we have made
‘Libation, may the crooked bow lay down ;
‘And bid at early dawn Melanthius, 265
‘The keeper of the goats, to bring the best
‘Of all the flocks, that, offering the thighs
‘To Phœbus, famed for archery, we may
‘Make trial of the bow and end the strife.’

Thus spake Antinous : his words pleased well.
Upon their hands the heralds water poured ; 270
The young men crowned the bowls with wine ; with
cups

Made off’rings and distributed to all.
When they had made libation and had drunk
All that their mind desired, a stratagem
The wise Ulysses planning for them said :
‘Hear me, ye suitors of the noble queen ! 275
‘[While what my mind commands me I shall say.]
‘I pray Eurymachus especially,
‘And the divine Antinous, for he
‘Has rightly spoken, to lay down the bow
‘And leave it to the Gods ; and in the morn 280
‘God will give victory to whom he wills.
‘But come, give me the polished bow, that I
‘Among you may my hands and prowess prove,
‘If any strength is in me such as once
‘Was in my supple limbs, or whether now

‘Travel and want of care have ruined it.’

He spake : they all were haughtily enraged, 285
Fearing lest he should stretch the polished bow.
Antinous thus chiding him replied :

‘O wretched stranger ! small indeed thy sense ;

‘Art not content to feast in peace with us

‘Great men, and nothing of the banquet miss, 290

‘And all our converse hear ? no other one,

‘Stranger and beggar, listens to our words.

‘Sweet wine affects thee, which hurts other men,

‘When greedily not properly one drinks.

‘Wine roused the Centaur, famed Eurytion, 295

‘When to the Lapithæ he came, the house

‘Of brave Pirithous ; he, when his mind

‘He roused with wine and maddened, did foul deeds

‘Within the palace of Pirithous :

‘But indignation on the hero seized ;

‘They rushed and dragged him through the vestibule

‘Out of the doors ; his ears and nose cut off 300

‘With brass unpitying : with grieving mind,

‘Bearing his woe, he went in agony :

‘Thence between men and Centaurs strife was caused,

‘And he his own woe found by drunkenness.

‘So great destruction I announce to thee 305

‘If thou shouldst stretch the bow, for no defence

‘Thou in our land wilt meet with ; we will send

‘Thee in a black ship to king Echetus,

‘Of all men the tormentor, and from thence

‘Thou’lt not escape. But sit and drink in peace,

‘Nor with men younger than thyself contend.’ 310

To him the wise Penelope replied :

‘ Antinous ! no honourable thing
‘ Nor just it is, to set at nought the guests
‘ Who to Telemachus’s house may come.
‘ Dost thou expect that, if the stranger stretch,
‘ Trusting in hands and strength, Ulysses’ bow, 315
‘ He will convey me home and make his wife ?
‘ He in his breast has no such hope as this :
‘ Let none of you for this his mind disturb
‘ While feasting here, for this becomes you not.’

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus, 320
To her replied : ‘ O wise Penelope !
‘ Child of Icarius ! we do not think
‘ That he will take thee off, nor is it fit ;
‘ But men’s and women’s rumour we regard,
‘ Lest of the Greeks some meaner one should say :
‘ “ Men far inferior woo a brave man’s wife, 325
‘ “ But cannot stretch the polished bow ; while one,
‘ “ A wand’ring beggar, came and easily
‘ “ Has stretched the bow and through the steel rings
shot.”

‘ So would they say, and ’twere disgrace to us.’

The wise Penelope to him replied : 330
‘ Eurymachus ! it is not possible
‘ That fair fame should belong to those who waste
‘ Disgracefully the substance of a prince.
‘ Why bring ye these reproaches on yourselves ?
‘ This stranger, large in stature and well-formed,
‘ Boasts of a noble sire to be the son : 335
‘ Give him the polished bow that we may see ;
‘ For thus I tell you, and it shall be done ;
‘ If he should stretch it, and if Phœbus gives

‘ This glory, I with tunic and with cloak,
‘ Fair garments, will array him, and will give
‘ A sharp spear to repel the dogs and men, 340
‘ A two-edged sword, and sandals for his feet,
‘ And send him where his heart and mind desire.’

The wise Telemachus replied and said :

‘ Mother ! no Greek has greater power than I
‘ Over the bow, to give it or refuse
‘ To whom I will : not any who bear rule 345
‘ Or in rough Ithaca, or in the isles
‘ Of Elis giving pasture to the horse ;
‘ No one of them shall force me ’gainst my will,
‘ If to the stranger I should choose to give
‘ The bow at once, to bear away with him.
‘ Enter the house, and thine own works control, 350
‘ The loom and distaff, and command thy maids
‘ To work : the bow shall be the care of men,
‘ And specially of me who rule the house.’

She wond’ring went again within the house,
And pondered in her mind her son’s wise speech. 355
With maids attendant to the upper room
She climbed, and there her husband dear bewailed,
Till on her eyes sweet sleep Minerva shed.
The swineherd went and took the crooked bow,
While all the suitors chided in the house ; 360
And of the overbearing youths one said
‘ Whither, thou wretched swineherd ! vagabond !
‘ Bear’st thou the bow ? the swift dogs thou hast bred
‘ To guard the swine shall quickly eat thee up
‘ Apart from men, if but propitious be
‘ Apollo and th’ immortal Gods to us.’ 365

They spake : he took and laid it in its place,
Fearing lest many in the house should chide.

Telemachus in turn with threats replied :

‘Bring the bow forward, friend ! thou wilt not well

‘Obey them all, lest, younger though I be, 370

‘I drive thee to the field, and pelt with stones ;

‘For I am thy superior in strength :

‘Would that to all the suitors in the house

‘I were in strength as much superior !

‘Some from our house a mournful journey soon

‘I’d send, for they are meditating ill.’ 375

He spake : the suitors all laughed pleasantly,

And ceased from wrath against Telemachus.

The swineherd through the palace brought the bow,

Stood near and placed it in Ulysses’ hands ;

Called nurse Euryclea apart, and said : 380

‘Prudent Euryclea ! Telemachus

‘Bids thee to lock the house’s well-made doors ;

‘And if one hear a groan or noise of men

‘Within our courts, let no one go outside

‘The doors, but silent at their work remain.’ 385

He spake : the word flew not unheeded by,

But of the well-built house she locked the doors.

Philæti^{us} in silence out of doors

Leapt from the house and barred the court-yard gates.

There lay the cable of a two-banked ship, 390

Under the portico, of byblus made,

With which he bound the portals and went in,

And sate upon the seat from whence he rose,

Eyeing Ulysses : he took up the bow,

Turning it here and there to try if worms 395

Had while the king was absent gnawed the horns ;
And thus one looking to his neighbour said :

‘ He ’s an admirer of or skilled in bows :

‘ Either some like it lie for him at home,

‘ Or he intends to make one ; here and there

‘ He turns it, vagabond in evils skilled !’

400

Again another of the proud youths said :

‘ May he therefrom as much advantage gain

‘ As in his pow’r it is to stretch the bow !’

Ulysses the bird

So spake the suitors : but Ulysses wise

(When he had handled and well viewed the bow,— 405

As when a man, well skilled in harp and song,

On a new pin strains easily the string,

Fitting with well-twined entrail of the sheep,—

So carefully Ulysses stretched the bow,

And in his right hand took and tried the string 410

✓ Which twanged well, like a swallow in its note.

Vexation on the suitors came ; of all

The colour changed : Jove thund’ring shewed a sign.

Patient divine Ulysses then rejoiced

That crafty Saturn’s son an omen sent. 415

An arrow swift he took which lay exposed

Upon the table ; in the quiver were

The rest which soon the Grecians were to feel.

Taking the bow upon his arm, he drew

The string and nocks, while sitting, from his chair, 420

And taking aim in front the arrow shot,

Nor from the first ring any axes missed.

Quite through the door the brass-tipped arrow passed ;

And then he thus Telemachus addressed :

‘ Telemachus ! the stranger in thine house

'Does not disgrace thee ; neither have I missed 425
 'The mark, nor laboured long to stretch the bow.
 'My strength still firm remains, nor even can
 'The suitors who dishonour me find fault.
 'Now is the time in day-light for the Greeks
 'A supper to prepare, and then rejoice
 'In song and harp, adornments of the feast.' 430

He spake, and with his eye-brows made a sign ;
 Telemachus, Ulysses' dear son, girt
 His sharp sword, laid his hand upon a spear,
 And near his father's seat stood armed with brass.

BOOK XXII. ✓

THE wise Ulysses bared him of his rags,
 And leaping on the spacious threshold stood ;
 The bow and quiver filled with arrows held,
 Poured the swift weapons forth upon the ground
 Before his feet, and to the suitors said :

'This harmless contest is at last complete : 5
 'Now for another mark, which no one yet
 'Has struck, and I will see if I can strike ;
 'And may Apollo fame on me bestow !'

He spake, and aimed against Antinous
 A bitter arrow : he was just about
 To take a beauteous golden two-eared cup, 10
 And held it in his hands to drink the wine ;
 But death was little present to his mind.

Who would have thought that, while men feasting were,
One among many, brave though he might be,
Would plan for him sad death and gloomy fate?

Ulysses with an arrow struck his throat, 15

And the sharp point passed through his tender neck.

Side-ways he rolled, and from his hand when struck

The goblet fell ; a stream of human gore

Thick through his nostrils came ; he with his foot

The table from him pushed, and on the floor

The viands strewed ; the bread and roasted flesh 20

Were fouled : the suitors through the palace raised

A clamour, when they saw the man fall down ;

Rushed from their seats in tumult through the house,

Peering from all sides on the well-built walls ;

But there was nowhere shield or spear to take. 25

Ulysses they with angry words reviled :

‘ Stranger ! thou shootest wickedly at men :

‘ No other contests shalt thou undertake ;

‘ Sad death is certain for thee ; thou hast slain

‘ The best of all the youths in Ithaca,

‘ And therefore vultures shall devour thee here !’ 30

Yet each one thought that he not wilfully

Had slain the man ; but, fools ! they did not see

That to them all the goal of death drew near.

Ulysses eyed them sternly and addressed :

‘ Ye dogs ! ye never thought that I from Troy 35

‘ Should home return, when ye consumed my house,

‘ And with the handmaids forcibly intrigued,

‘ And wooed the wife of one who’s yet alive,

‘ Fearing nor Gods who dwell in heav’n on high,

‘ Nor that from men revenge would after come : 40

‘Now to you all the goal of death draws near.’

He spake, and pale fear seized upon them all,
And each gazed anxious how to flee from death.
Eurymachus alone replied and said :

‘If Ithacan Ulysses thou art come, 45

‘Thou speakest right of what the Greeks have done ;

‘Many foul deeds both in the house and lands.

‘But here lies he who was the cause of all,

‘Antinous, for he these deeds began :

‘He not the marriage cared for nor desired 50

‘So much as things which Jove has not performed,

‘That he might rule well-peopled Ithaca

‘Himself, from ambush having slain thy son.

‘With justice he is slain ; but spare thou now

‘Thy people ; we hereafter publicly 55

‘Will to appease thee pay what in thine house

‘Has been consumed in food and drink ; will pay

‘A penalty of twenty oxen each,

‘And brass and gold until thine heart is glad :

‘No blame that thou hast been enraged before.’

Ulysses sternly eyeing him replied : 60

‘Eurymachus ! if ye would give me all

‘Your patrimony, all ye now possess,

‘And add whate’er from elsewhere there may be,

‘Not even so would I restrain my hands

‘From slaughter, ere on all the suitors’ band

‘I took revenge for all their violence.

‘The choice before you lies, to fight or fly, 65

‘Who ever can from death and fate escape ;

‘Yet none, I think, destruction will avoid.’

He spake: their knees and dear heart were unnerved.

- ✓ ✓ Eurymachus then spoke the second time :
‘ Friends ! since he will not his resistless hands 70
‘ Restrain, but polished bow and quiver takes,
‘ He from the threshold will his arrows shoot
‘ Till he slay all ; but let us heed the fight :
‘ Draw forth your swords and hold the tables up
‘ Against the arrows ; on him let us all 75
‘ Closely collected fall : if we could but
‘ Repel him from the threshold and the doors,
‘ We to the town would go ; a clamour soon
‘ Would rise, and this man now the last time shoot.’
He spoke, and drew his two-edged brazen sword,
And leapt against him with a dreadful shout. 80
Ulysses, at the moment sending forth
An arrow, near the nipple struck his breast,
And fixed the rapid weapon in his heart.
He from his hand let fall upon the ground
His sword, and stagg’ring round the table fell ; 85
Upset the viands and the double cup,
And with his forehead smote in agony
The ground ; with both his feet he struck and shook
His seat, and darkness o’er his eyes was poured.
✓ Amphinomus came rushing on against
Noble Ulysses, and his sharp sword drew, 90
If from the doors he might perhaps retreat.
Telemachus came first, and from behind
Struck him between the shoulders with his spear,
And drove the weapon through his breast ; he fell,
And sounding with his forehead smote the ground.
Telemachus then rushed away and left 95
His long spear in Amphinomus, afraid

Lest, while his long spear he withdrew, some Greek
Should rush and strike him with a downward blow.
He ran and quickly to his father came,
And standing near him spoke these wingèd words: 100
‘Father! a shield and two spears I will bring,
‘A brazen helmet fitted to thy brows;
‘Will go and armour put around myself,
‘And to the swineherd and the herdsman give
‘More weapons, for ’tis better to be armed.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said: 105
‘Run quick, while I have arrows for defence,
‘Lest from the doors they drive me while alone.’

He spake: Telemachus his sire obeyed;
Went to the chamber where their armour lay;
Four shields, eight spears, four helmets made of
brass 110

And rough with horse-hair plumes he took from thence,
Brought them and quickly to his father came.
He round his body first the brass put on;
The servants donned their beauteous arms and stood
Around Ulysses, wise, of varied plans. 115

He, while there arrows were to drive them off,
Each of the suitors aimed at in the house
And struck, and near each other they fell down:
But, when the arrows failed, the archer-king
Upon a column of the well-built house 120
Rested the bow against the shining wall,
And round his shoulders girt a four-fold shield;
On his strong head a well-made helmet placed
With horse-hair plumed, while nodded terribly
The crest, and two strong brass-tipped spears he
took. 125

There was a raised door in the well-built wall,
And by the top-floor of the house a way
Into a narrow lane, which boards enclosed :
Ulysses bade the swineherd standing near
To watch it, for it was the sole approach. 130

But Agelaus thus addressed them all :
' Friends ! could not some one to the raised door climb
' And tell the people ? quick alarm would be,
' And his last arrow this man soon have shot.'

To him Melanthius, the goatherd, said : 135
' This, Jove-born Agelaus ! could not be,
' For the hall's beauteous doors are very near,
' And difficult the narrow lane's approach :
' One man, if brave he were, could check us all.
' Arms from the chamber I will bring for you ;
' Within, I think, and nowhere else the arms 140
' Ulysses and his noble son have placed.'

Melanthius, the goatherd, speaking thus
Climbed through a narrow passage of the house ;
Twelve spears, as many shields, as many casques
Made all of brass and rough with horse-hair took ; 145
Hasted and quickly to the suitors brought
And gave them. Then Ulysses' knees and heart
Failed when he saw them putting armour on,
And brandishing the long spears in their hands.
Great seemed the work before him ; he with speed
Spake to Telemachus these wingèd words : 150
' Telemachus ! one of the women stirs
' The fight against us, or Melanthius.'

The wise Telemachus replied and said :
' Father ! 'tis I who failed in this, none else

‘Is blameable, who, when the chamber door 155
‘Which fitted close I opened, left it so :
‘Their sentinel was better than was I.
‘But come, Eumæus ! close the chamber door :
‘Find if some woman does this, or the son
‘Of Dolius, Melantheus, as I guess.’

Such words they thus to one another spoke : 160
The goatherd to the chamber went again,
Melanthius, the weapons fair to bring.
The swineherd spied him out, and quickly thus
Addressed Ulysses, who was standing near :
‘Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !
‘That man whom we suspected secretly 165
‘Is going to the chamber ; clearly say,
‘If I should overcome him, should I kill
‘Or bring him hither to thee, that he may
‘Pay for the many insults he has wrought ?’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said : 170
‘I and Telemachus within the house
‘Will keep the suitors, eager though they be :
‘But ye two, turning back his hands and feet,
‘Into the chamber throw him ; close the door
‘Behind ; a noose make with a twisted rope ; 175
‘Him to a lofty column drag therewith,
‘And bring him near the beams, that while alive
‘He may a long while dreadful woes endure.’

He spake : they quickly heard him, and obeyed,
And to the chamber went, but were not seen
By him within ; he in its deep recess 180
Was seeking armour ; on each side of him
The two, remaining near the columns, stood :

But when Melanthius the goatherd crossed
The threshold, bearing in one hand a casque
And in the other hand a buckler broad,
Old, and by dryness injured ; (it belonged 185
To brave Laertes, which when young he bore ;
Now there it lay ; the straps were all unsewn :)
The two rushed on, and seizing by the hair,
Dragged him and threw him down upon the floor,
Deeply afflicted ; tied his hands and feet
Completely with a grievous bond, as bade 190
Patient Ulysses, of Laertes son.
With twisted rope they bound and drew him up
A lofty column, till he neared the beams.
Him scoffing, thou, Eumæus ! didst address :
'Thou shalt keep watch, Melanthius, all night, 195
'On a soft couch reclining, as is fit.
'When gold-throned dawn shall come from ocean's
streams,
'She will not fail to see thee, when thou bring'st
'The goats to feed the suitors in the house.'
So he was left, stretched by a deadly bond. 200
They donned their arms and closed the shining door,
And to the valiant wise Ulysses went.
There, breathing courage forth, they stood, the four
Upon the threshold ; but within the house
The others were both numerous and brave.
To them Minerva, child of Jove, came near, 205
Resembling Mentor both in form and voice.
Ulysses joyed to see her, and addressed :
'Mentor ! assist the fight and thy dear friend
'Remember, one who did kind deeds to thee ;

‘And thou too art of equal age with me.’

He spake, suspecting ’twas Minerva’s self. 210

The suitors on their side a clamour made,

And Agelaus first rebuked her thus :

‘Mentor ! let not Ulysses by his words

‘Persuade thee with the suitors to contend

‘In fight, and be defender of himself :

‘For thus I think our purpose will be gained ; 215

‘When we have slain the father and the son,

‘Thou too among them shalt be slain for what

‘Thou plann’st to do, and pay it with thine head.

‘When with our brass we’ve checked your violence,

‘Thy goods whate’er they be, at home, abroad, 220

‘We will combine with what Ulysses has,

‘Nor will we suffer in thine house thy sons

‘To live ; nor daughters nor thy prudent wife

‘Will we permit to dwell in Ithaca.’

He spake : Minerva was the more enraged,

And chid Ulysses with these angry words : 225

‘Ulysses ! nor thy mind nor strength is firm,

‘As when for white-armed high-born Helen thou

‘Didst with the Trojans war incessantly

‘Nine years, and many slay in dreadful fight,

‘And by thy counsel wide-wayed Troy was ta’en : 230

‘How now, when at thine house and goods arrived,

‘Shunn’st thou against the suitors to be brave ?

‘Come, friend ! stand by me and my actions see,

‘That thou mayst know how benefits repays

‘Mentor Alcimides among thy foes.’ 235

She spake, nor yet gave certain victory,

But still made trial of the strength and force

Both of Ulysses and his noble son ;
Herself upon the shining house's roof
Hasted to sit, a swallow in her form. 240

Then Agelaus, of Daniastor son,
The suitors urged ; so did Euronymus,
Amphimedon and Demoptolemus,
Polyctor's son Pisander, Polybus
The valiant ; of the suitors far the best
Of those who still survived and fought for life ; 245
The bow and rapid shafts had slain the rest.

Addressing them thus Agelaus said :

‘ Friends ! now shall this man stay his daring hands :
‘ Mentor, who made vain boasts, is gone away,
‘ And at the first doors they are left alone. 250
‘ Your long spears hurl not at him all at once,
‘ But come ! ye six shoot first, if Jove should grant
‘ Ulysses to be struck, and fame be yours.’

He spake : they all as he commanded hurled 255
Their spears ; Minerva made them all in vain :
One struck a column of the well-built hall,
One the close-fitting door ; another's spear,
Ashen and brass-tipped, in the wall was fixed.
But when they had escaped the suitors' spears, 260
Patient divine Ulysses thus began :

‘ Now, friends ! I tell you is the time for us
‘ Into the suitors' band to shoot, who would
‘ Slay us besides their former injuries.’

So spake he, and they all with forward aim 265
Hurled their sharp jav'lins, and Ulysses then
Slew Demoptolemus ; Telemachus
Euryades ; the swineherd Elatus ;

The herdsman of the kine Pisander slew ;
These with their teeth all bit the spacious floor.
The victors to the hall's recess retired ; 270
The spears they hasting from the dead men took.
Again the suitors eager hurled their spears ;
Minerva made them for the most part vain ;
One struck a column of the well-built hall,
One the close-fitting door, another's spear, 275
Ashen and brass-tipped, in the wall was fixed.
Amphimedon indeed upon the hand
Struck slightly, near the wrist, Telemachus,
And the spear scarred the surface of the skin.
Ctesippus with his spear Eumæus grazed,
Over his shield, upon the shoulder-blade ;
But it flew o'er and fell upon the ground. 280
The valiant wise Ulysses and his friends
Into the suitors' band their sharp spears hurled.
He struck Eurydamas ; Telemachus
Amphimedon ; the swineherd Polybus ;
The herdsman of the kine Ctesippus next 285
Struck on the breast, and boasting thus addressed :
' O son of Polytherses ! railer ! yield
' No more to folly, nor speak haughty words,
' But leave them to the Gods who stronger are.
' This hospitable gift requites to thee 290
' The foot which thou didst to Ulysses give,
' Coming a vagrant beggar to his house.'

So spake the herdsman : then Ulysses struck
Close by him with his spear Damastor's son ;
Telemachus too, wounded with his spear
In the mid-groin Leocritus, the son

Of Euenor, and drove the brass right through : 295
He headlong with his forehead struck the ground.
Minerva then her man-destroying shield
Reared from the roof on high ; the suitors' minds
Were terrified, and through the house they fled,
Like herded cows which the swift gad-fly frights 300
Hasting in spring-time, when the days grow long.
The others, as when from the mountains dash
Vultures, with crooked claws and beaks, on birds
That from the nets fly frightened o'er the plain,
And pouncing kill them, nor does strength avail, 305
Nor flight, and in the prey the men rejoice ;
The others so upon the suitors rushed,
And struck them as around the house they ran.
Unseemly groaning, when their heads were struck,
Arose, and all the pavement streamed with blood.
Leiodes hasting seized Ulysses' knees, 310
And supplicating spoke these wingèd words :
' Ulysses ! I embrace thy knees ; respect
' And pity me ; for I declare that I
' Nothing licentious either did or said
' To any woman in the house, but checked 315
' The other suitors when one such things did ;
' But they would not obey me, to restrain
' Their hands from evil deeds, and therefore they
' Have drawn upon them an unseemly fate ;
' But I, their soothsayer, who did no ill,
' Must die ; no thanks hereafter for good deeds.'
Him wise Ulysses sternly eyed and said : 320
' If then thou boast'st a soothsayer to be
' Among them, thou must frequently have prayed

‘ That distant far my sweet return might be ;
‘ That my dear wife should follow thee and bear 325
‘ Thee children : death’s sad sleep thou mayst not shun.’

He spake and with his strong hand seized the sword
Which Agelaus on the ground let fall
When he was slaughtered, and with this he struck
The middle of his neck ; and, e’en while still
He spoke, his head was mingled with the dust.
But Phemius, the son of Terpias, 330

The bard who had upon compulsion sung
Among the suitors, gloomy death escaped ;
He stood, the sweet harp holding in his hands,
Close by the raised door, and had two-fold thoughts ;
Either, escaping from the house, to sit
Before the well-built altar of great Jove,
Protector of the house, where formerly 335
Laertes and Ulysses used to burn

The thighs of many oxen, or to haste
And supplicate Ulysses at his knees.
This, as he meditated, seemed the best ;
To touch Laertes’ son, Ulysses’ knees.

He placed his hollow harp upon the ground, 340
Between the cup and silver-studded throne ;
Hasting he took Ulysses by the knees,
And supplicating spoke these wingèd words :

‘ Ulysses ! I embrace thy knees ; respect
‘ And pity me ; ’twill to thyself be grief 345
‘ Hereafter, shouldst thou kill a bard who sings
‘ To Gods and men ; self-taught am I ; the Gods
‘ Inspired my soul with ev’ry mode of song :
‘ As to a God beside thee I can sing ;

‘ Seek not to slay me then ; Telemachus, 350
‘ Thy son, could tell thee that, against my will,
‘ Reluctant I resorted to thine house,
‘ And to the suitors sang amid their feasts :
‘ Many and strong they urged me on by force.’

He spake : Telemachus, of sacred strength,
Heard and addressed his father, standing near : 355
‘ Refrain, nor wound him guiltless with thy sword :
‘ The herald Medon also we will save,
‘ Who in our house took care of me a child ;
‘ Unless Philoetius have slain him, or
‘ The swineherd ; or he may have met with thee,
‘ When thou wert rushing fiercely through the house.’

He spake : and Medon, man of prudence, heard, 360
For cowering he lay beneath a throne,
And round him put an ox-hide newly skinned,
Avoiding gloomy fate ; but swift he rose
From ’neath the throne and put the hide away ;
Then rushing, by the knees Telemachus 365
He took, and praying spoke these wingèd words :
‘ Here, friend ! I am ; restrain thyself, and bid
‘ Thy father that, with his superior force,
‘ With his sharp sword he would not injure me
‘ In anger at the suitors, who consumed
‘ Thy household goods, and, fools ! dishonoured thee.’

The wise Ulysses smiling answered him : 370
‘ Take heart ; since he has rescued thee and saved,
‘ Know in thine own mind and to others tell
‘ How that good deeds are better far than bad.
‘ But from the house depart ye, and sit down 375
‘ Outside the doors, within the court, both thou

‘And the harmonious bard, while in the house
‘I will perform the work I needs must do.’

He spake : they two went from the palace forth,
And at the altar of the great Jove sate,
Gazing around and still expecting death. 380

Ulysses searched throughout the house, if still
Any yet living might have crept away,
Avoiding gloomy fate ; he saw them all,
And there were many, laid in blood and dust,
Like fishes which the fishermen have drawn
From the white sea within a much-meshed net 385

Upon the hollow shore, and on the sands,
Of the sea’s wave deprived, they all are poured,
While the sun shining takes their lives away ;
The suitors so were on each other heaped.
Ulysses then Telemachus addressed : 390

‘Telemachus ! go call Euryclea,
‘The nurse, that I may tell what I propose.’

He spake : Telemachus his sire obeyed ;
Striking the door, he called Euryclea :
‘Rise quick and hither come, thou aged dame ! 395

‘Who in our house art guardian of our maids :
‘My father calls that he may speak to thee.’

He spake : the word flew not unheeded by ;
The doors she opened of the well-built house,
Hasting to go ; ‘Telemachus went first : 400

She found Ulysses ’mid the slain, besmeared
With blood and gore, as when a lion comes
Who of a stall-fed ox has made a prey,
And all his breast and jaws on either side
Are bloody ; dreadful he to look upon ; 405

So was Ulysses stained on feet and hands.
She, when she saw the slain and blood immense,
Rushed with a cry, for great the deed she saw.
Ulysses checked her in her eagerness,
And calling to her spoke these wingèd words : 410
‘ Nurse ! in thy mind exult, and check thyself
‘ Nor shout ; ’tis impious o’er the slain to boast :
‘ Fate from the Gods and their own wicked deeds
‘ Have slain these men : for none of men on earth
‘ Have they respected, either bad or good, 415
‘ Whoever came to them ; and therefore they
‘ Have by their own crimes met unseemly death.
‘ Come tell me of the women in the house,
‘ Who me dishonour, who are innocent ?’

To him the nurse Euryclea replied :
‘ Well then, my son ! I will the truth relate : 420
‘ Within the house are fifty female slaves,
‘ Whom I have taught their labours to perform,
‘ To card the wool and do what service asks :
‘ In ways immodest twelve of them have walked,
‘ Not honouring me nor e’en Penelope : 425
‘ Telemachus was growing up, nor him
‘ His mother to control the maids allowed.
‘ I’ll to the shining chamber go to tell
‘ Thy wife, to whom the God has slumber sent.’

The wise Ulysses answered her, and said : 430
‘ Wake her not yet, but bid those maids to come,
‘ Who have committed the unseemly deeds.’

He spoke : the old dame went from out the house
To tell the women and their coming urge.
He, to him summoning Telemachus,

The herdsman and the swineherd, quickly spoke :
‘Begin to carry off the carcasses,
‘And bid the women aid you ; afterwards
‘With water and with sponges perforate
‘The beauteous thrones and tables purify.
‘When ye have all within the house arranged, 440
‘Lead forth the servants from the well-built house,
‘Between the tow’r and courtyard of the hall,
‘And with your long swords slay them, till of all
‘Ye shall the lives have ta’en, and they forget
‘The suitors’ love and their licentious deeds.’ 445

He spake : the women in a body came,
Dreadfully wailing, pouring down warm tears.
They first bore off the bodies of the slain,
And placed them in the well-fenced courtyard’s porch
In rivalry ; Ulysses gave command, 450
Urging the work ; they bore them off perforce :
With water and with sponges perforate
The beauteous thrones and tables purified :
The herdsman, swineherd, and Telemachus,
With shovels scraped the well-built house’s floor : 455
The servants bore and placed all out of doors.
When all the house they had in order set,
They brought the servants from the well-built house,
Between the tow’r and courtyard of the hall,
And shut them in whence no escape there was. 460
The wise Telemachus then thus began :
‘I would not by an honourable death
‘Slay those who poured abuse upon my head,
‘And on my mother, with the suitors joined.’

He spake ; and from a pillar of the tow’r 465

Hanging the cable of a dark-prowed ship
Put it around them, stretching it on high
That no one with her feet might reach the ground.
As when the long-winged throistles or the doves
Strike on a net, which in a bush is placed,
Ent'ring their nest, whom a sad couch awaits, 470
So they in order held their heads ; round all
Their necks were nooses ; 'twas a wretched death.
They quivered with their feet, but not for long.
They brought Melantheus through the porch and hall,
Cut with relentless brass his nose and ears, 475
Drew forth his entrails for the dogs to eat,
And hands and feet with angry mind cut off.
Then, having washed their hands and feet, they sought
Ulysses in the house ; the work was done.

Then he addressed the nurse Euryclea : 480
'Old dame ! bring sulphur, antidote of ills ;
'Bring fire that I may fumigate the house,
'And hither bid Penelope to come
'With her attendant women, and urge all
'The female servants in the house to come.'

To him the nurse Euryclea replied : 485
'In truth, my child ! thou this hast rightly said ;
'But let me bring a tunic and a cloak
'Nor stand thus in thine house arrayed in rags
'On thy broad shoulders ; this a shame would be.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said : 490
'Now let there first be in the house a fire.'

He spake : the nurse Euryclea obeyed,
And fire and sulphur brought to him, wherewith
Ulysses fumigated house and hall.

Then through Ulysses' house the old dame went 495
 To tell the women and to bid them haste.
 They came forth holding in their hands a torch,
 And gath'ring round Ulysses greeted him,
 And lovingly his head and shoulders kissed,
 Holding his hands ; and on him sweet desire 500
 Of tears and wailing came ; he knew them all.

BOOK XXIII.

THE old dame to the chamber joyous came
 To tell the queen her husband was within :
 Her knees were strengthened and her feet moved quick.
 Over her head she stood, and thus addressed :
 ' Wake up, Penelope ! dear child ! to see 5
 ' With thine own eyes what thou hast long desired ;
 ' Ulysses to his home though late has come,
 ' And slain the suitors who distressed his house,
 ' Devoured his substance and oppressed his son.'

The wise Penelope replied and said : 10
 ' Dear nurse ! the Gods have made thee mad, who can
 ' Render one foolish though he wise may be,
 ' And change to prudence one of feeble mind ;
 ' And they have hurt thee of right sense before.
 ' Why mock me, who have sorrows in my mind, 15
 ' Speaking beside the truth, and wake me up
 ' From the sweet sleep which held me in its chain
 ' And covered up my eyelids, such as I

‘Have never slumbered since Ulysses went
‘To that bad Troy which never should be named?
‘But now go down and to the hall return : 20
‘If other of the women whom I have
‘Had told me this and roused me from my sleep,
‘Back to the hall I would have sent her off
‘With sad return ; thine age shall help thee here.’

To her the nurse Euryclea replied : 25
‘I mock thee not at all, dear child ! in truth
‘Ulysses, as I say, has reached his home,
‘The stranger whom all in the house reviled.
‘Telemachus indeed knew long ago
‘That he was here, but prudently concealed
‘The knowledge of his sire, that so he might 30
‘Punish the violence of haughty men.’

She spoke : she leaping from her couch with joy
Embraced the aged dame, and from her eyes
Let fall a tear, and spake these wingèd words :
‘O but, dear nurse ! do come and tell me true : 35
‘If, as thou say’st, he has indeed come home,
‘How on the shameless suitors laid he hands
‘Alone, while they remained in crowds within?’

To her the nurse Euryclea replied :
‘I saw not, asked not, but I only heard 40
‘The groaning of the slain ; we terrified
‘Sate in the well-built chamber’s deep recess :
‘The folding doors, close-fitting, kept us in
‘Till from the house thy son, Telemachus,
‘Called me, because his father bade him call.
‘I found Ulysses standing ’mid the slain, 45
‘And they around him on the firm-set floor

‘ On one another lay ; thou in thy mind
 ‘ Wouldst have rejoiced if thou hadst but beheld
 ‘ Him, like a lion, stained with blood and gore :
 ‘ They by the courtyard gates all lie in heaps,
 ‘ But he, a great fire kindling, fumigates 50
 ‘ The house, and sent me on to summon thee.
 ‘ Follow me then that both may in your hearts
 ‘ Rejoice, for much woe ye have undergone.
 ‘ This long desire is now at last fulfilled ;
 ‘ He living to his hearth himself has come,
 ‘ And in his house has found thee and his son ; 55
 ‘ But for the suitors who have done him wrong,—
 ‘ He in his house has been revenged on all.’

The wise Penelope replied, and said :

‘ Dear nurse ! exulting do not greatly boast ;
 ‘ Thou know’st that he most welcome would appear 60
 ‘ To all within the house, and specially
 ‘ To me and to our son Telemachus.
 ‘ But as thou tell’st the tale it is not true ;
 ‘ One of th’ immortals has the suitors slain,
 ‘ Hating their grievous pride and evil deeds ;
 ‘ For they respected none of men on earth, 65
 ‘ Nor bad nor good, whoever to them came,
 ‘ And therefore for their crimes have suffered ills ;
 ‘ But his return Ulysses far from Greece
 ‘ Has lost, and he himself is lost besides.’

To her the nurse Euryclea replied :

‘ My child ! what word has now thy lips escaped, 70
 ‘ Who say’st thy husband, now upon the hearth,
 ‘ Will not return ? incredulous thy mind :
 ‘ But come, another plain proof I will tell ;

‘The scar, which once a boar with white tooth made,
‘Which, while I bathed him, I perceived, and wished
‘To tell thee, but he holding with his hands 75
‘My mouth, in his great prudence checked my speech.
‘But follow ! I will pledge myself ; if I
‘Deceive thee, kill me by a grievous death.’

The wise Penelope replied and said : 80
‘Dear nurse ! ’tis hard for thee, though wise thou art,
‘To foil the counsels of th’immortal Gods.
‘We to my son will go, that so I may
‘The suitors slain and who has slain them see.’

Thus speaking, from the upper room she went, 85
And her heart doubted whether she should stand
Apart and questions to her husband put,
Or should approach and kiss his head and hands.
When she came in and o’er the threshold passed
Fronting Ulysses, by the other wall
In the fire’s light she sate ; he looking down 90
By a tall column sate, expecting still
That, when she saw him with her eyes, his wife
Would speak to him ; she long sate silently,
And on her heart there came astonishment.
One while, indeed, she eyed him face to face,
Another while she could not recognise 95
One wearing on his body garments mean.
Telemachus then chided her and said :
‘O mother ! cruel mother ! hard in soul !
‘Why from my father keep so far apart,
‘Nor sit beside him nor interrogate ?
‘No other woman with unyielding mind 100
‘Would at such distance from her husband be,

‘ Who, having suffered many sorrows, came
‘ To his own country in the twentieth year :
‘ Thy heart is ever harder than a stone.’

To him the wise Penelope replied :

‘ My child ! my mind and breast are stupefied : 105
‘ I can nor say a word, nor question put,
‘ Nor look upon his face : if truly he
‘ Ulysses is, and to his house has come,
‘ We two shall know each other better still ;
‘ For there are secret signs between us ; these,
‘ Concealed from others, we shall recognise.’ 110

She spake : long-suffering Ulysses smiled
And to Telemachus spake wingèd words :

‘ Telemachus ! permit thy mother still
‘ To try me ; she will know me better soon.
‘ Since I am squalid and mean garments wear 115
‘ She scorns me, nor believes that I am he.
‘ But let us counsel how it best may be ;
‘ For he who in a state one man has slain,
‘ Whom few avengers follow after, flies
‘ Leaving his kindred and his native land ; 120
‘ We have the city’s bulwarks slain, who were
‘ The best of all the youths in Ithaca
‘ By far ; I bid thee meditate on this.’

The wise Telemachus replied and said :

‘ Dear father ! look to this thyself ; they say
‘ Thy wisdom is the highest among men,
‘ Nor other mortal could with thee contend. 125
‘ I eagerly will follow thee, nor think
‘ That, as my strength is, I shall courage lack.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ Then I will tell thee how it seems the best :
‘ First bathe yourselves and put your tunics on, 130
‘ And bid the handmaids put on their attire :
‘ Then let the bard divine his sweet harp take,
‘ And let him lead for us the sportive dance ;
‘ So one who listens from without will say,
‘ “ There is a wedding ” ; either one who walks 135
‘ Along the road, or those who dwell around ;
‘ That the wide rumour of the suitors’ death
‘ May not throughout the city be, before
‘ We to our farm, well stocked with trees, have gone ;
‘ And we thereafter will deliberate
‘ On what good plan Olympian Jove suggests.’ 140

So spake he : well they heard him and obeyed :
They bathed themselves, and put their tunics on ;
The women were attired ; the bard divine
Took up the hollow harp, and in them roused
Love for the sweet song and the blameless dance, 145
And the large house resounded to the feet
Of men and fair-zoned women as they danced.
And thus said one who listened from without :
‘ Some one has married now the much-wooed queen :
‘ Weak woman ! she no courage had to guard 150
‘ Her first-wed husband’s house till he should come.’

So some one said, nor knew they what was done.
Eurynome the house-keeper then bathed
Magnanimous Ulysses, and with oil 155
Anointed, put a vest and tunic on :
Minerva down his head much beauty poured,
Greater and more majestic made him seem,
And his crisp hair, like hyacinth, descend :

As gold on silver spreads a skilful man,
(Whom Vulcan and Minerva taught the art 160
Of varied kind) ; and graceful works completes ;
So on his head and shoulders grace she poured.
Forth from the bath like to the Gods he came,
And sate upon the seat from whence he rose,
Fronting his wife, and then addressed her thus : 165
'Lady ! the Gods, who have Olympian homes,
'Have made thy heart beyond all women's hard :
'No other woman with unyielding mind
'Would at such distance from her husband be,
'Who, having suffered many sorrows, came
'To his own country in the twentieth year.
'But come, nurse ! spread a couch, that I may sleep 170
'Alone ; her heart is steel within her breast.'

To him the wise Penelope replied :
'Good friend ! I neither magnify at all,
'Nor undervalue, nor admire too much.
'Full well I know what once thou wert, when thou 175
'Didst in a ship from Ithaca depart.
'Come, spread a couch for him, Euryclea !
'Within the chamber which he made himself ;
'And ye, when ye have placed the bed-stead there,
'Lay clothing, fleeces, cloaks, and bright rugs on.' 180

She thus to try her husband spoke ; but he
Disturbed, addressed again his prudent wife :
'Lady ! the word thou speakest grieves my heart.
'Who has removed my couch elsewhere ? 'twere hard
'E'en for a very skilful one, unless
'A God should come, and he could, if he willed, 185
'With ease remove it to another place :

' But none of mortal men alive, not one
 ' In prime of life, could move its fastenings ;
 ' For a great wonder in that well-made bed
 ' Was wrought, which I and no one else contrived.
 ' A long-leaved olive tree stood in the court, 190
 ' Full-grown and verdant, as a column thick :
 ' Putting a chamber round I built it up
 ' With layers of stone, and roofed it well above,
 ' And close doors, fitting well, I placed therein.
 ' The long-leaved olive's foliage I cut off, 195
 ' And, lopping from the root the trunk, with brass
 ' I made it smooth, and well and skilfully
 ' I straightened by a ruler, fashioning
 ' A bed-post, and with whimble bored it all.
 ' Beginning thence I polished up the bed,
 ' Till I completed, ornamenting it
 ' With gold, with silver, and with ivory, 200
 ' And stretched an ox-hide thong with purple bright.
 ' This sign I show thee thus, nor do I know
 ' If, lady ! still my bed is firm, or one
 ' Has moved it, cutting down the olive's trunk.'
 He spoke : her knees and dear heart were un-
 nerved, 205

Knowing the sure signs which Ulysses told.

Weeping she ran, and, round Ulysses' neck

Throwing her hands, she kissed his head and spoke

' Ulysses ! blame me not, since wiser thou

' Than others ; but the Gods have caused thee grief, 210

' Who grudged us with each other to remain,

' To joy in youth and age's threshold reach.

' But be not angry with me nor enraged,

‘ Because I did not when I saw thee first
‘ As now embrace thee : ever in my breast
‘ My mind was shudd’ring lest one with his words 215
‘ Delude me ; many evil plans devise.
‘ Not would the Argive Helen, sprung from Jove,
‘ Have with a foreigner intrigued in love,
‘ If she had known that warlike sons of Greeks 220
‘ Would bring her home to her paternal land :
‘ The God excited her foul deeds to do,
‘ But in her mind she had not thought upon
‘ The mischief sad, whence grief came first to us.
‘ Now, since thou tell’st me the undoubted signs 225
‘ About our couch, which none but we alone,
‘ Thou, I, and one hand-maiden, Actöris,
‘ (Whom when I hither came my father gave)
‘ Have seen (she kept our well-built chamber doors),
‘ Thou dost persuade my mind though hard it was.’ 230

She spake, and roused still more his wish for tears :
Holding his charming prudent wife he wept.
As welcome would the land appear to those
Who swim, whose well-made ship, compelled by wind
And strong waves, Neptune in the sea has wrecked,
And swimming from the white sea few escape 235
To land, while much brine gathers round their flesh,
And gladly step ashore escaping woe ;
So when she saw him welcome was her spouse,
Nor from his neck her white arms loosed she yet ; 240
And rosy-fingered morning, while they still
Were weeping, would have shown herself, had not
Blue-eyed Minerva thought of other things :
She checked the long night at its boundary,

Detained the gold-throned morning in the sea,
Nor suffered her to yoke her rapid steeds, 245
Lampus and Phaethon, who bear the light
To men, the horses who bring in the dawn.
Then to his wife the wise Ulysses said :
'My wife ! we have not yet attained the end
'Of all our labours ; one remains behind,
'Immeasurable, great and difficult, 250
'And this it still behoves me to complete ;
'For so the spirit of Tiresias
'Foretold me, on the day when I went down
'Within the house of Pluto to inquire
'Of my companions' and my own return.
'But come, wife ! let us to our couch retreat,
'That we reposing may sweet sleep enjoy.' 255

To him the wise Penelope replied :
'The couch shall be for thee when in thy mind
'Thou wishest, since the Gods have made thee reach
'Thy well-built house and thy paternal land.
'But, since thou thinkest of it and the God 260
'Has put it in thy mind, about the toil
'Come tell me ; I hereafter, I suppose,
'Shall hear it ; 'tis not worse to know it now.'

The wise Ulysses answered her and said :
'Unhappy one ! why urge me to repeat
'The tale ? but I will tell it nor conceal ; 265
'Thy mind will not rejoice thereat, nor I
'Rejoice. He bade me go to many towns,
'Until I came to men who do not know
'The sea, nor eat their victuals mixed with salt, 270
'Nor know they ships whose sides are painted red,

' Nor the broad oars which are the wings of ships.
 ' He gave, I will not hide it, this clear sign :
 ' When me some other traveller should meet,
 ' And say I bear a fan to winnow corn
 ' Upon my noble shoulder, then the oar 275
 ' He bade that I should fix upon the ground,
 ' And that, to royal Neptune having made
 ' Fair sacrifice, a lamb, a bull, a boar,
 ' I should go home and sacred hecatombs
 ' Give to the Gods who in the wide sky dwell, 280
 ' To all of them in order ; from the sea
 ' Death without violence would on me come
 ' To kill me, by a prosperous old age
 ' Weighed down : contented should my subjects be,
 ' Around me : this he told me should be done.'

To him the wise Penelope replied : 285
 ' If then the Gods more prosperous old age
 ' Vouchsafe, there's hope for refuge from our woes.'

Such words they thus to one another spoke :
 Eurynome the meanwhile and the nurse
 By shining lights a soft-clothed couch prepared. 290
 When the thick couch they busily had strewed
 The old dame to the house returned to sleep.
 Eurynome, whose charge the chamber was,
 Preceded them as to the couch they went,
 Holding a torch and to the chamber led
 The way, and then retired ; while they with joy 295
 Again upon the nuptial couch reposed.
 Telemachus, the herdsman, swineherd, then
 Ceased from the dance and made the women cease,
 And in the shady palace went to rest.

But when the two woke up from their repose 300
They pleased themselves with interchange of words :
She, the divine one, told what ills she bore,
When in the house the suitors' wasteful band
She saw, who slew the oxen and fat sheep
For her ; and much wine from the casks was drawn. 305
Noble Ulysses told what woes he brought
On men, what sorrows he himself endured.
He told it all and she was charmed to hear,
Nor slumbered she till he had told her all.
First he began how the Ciconians 310
He had subdued, and to the fruitful land
Of the Lotophagi had come ; next what
The Cyclops did, and how he had avenged
The friends whom he un pitying devoured ;
How came to Æolus, who him received
Kindly and sent him off ; but 'twas not yet
The fate for him to reach his native land, 315
For the storm hurried him away, and bore
Heavily groaning o'er the fishy sea.
Then told he how to Læstrygonia,
Having wide gates, he went, and how those men
Destroyed his ships and all his well-greaved friends.
[Ulysses only in a ship escaped.] 320
Of Circe's wiles and varied artifice
He told ; how in a well-benched ship he went
To Pluto's gloomy mansion, that he might
Consult Tiresias' the Theban's soul ;
All his companions, and his mother saw,
Who bore and nourished him while yet a babe ; 325
How the assembled Sirens' voice he heard ;

How to the wand'ring rocks he came, and dire
Charybdis, and, whom none unharmed escaped,
To Scylla ; how the oxen of the sun
His friends had slaughtered ; how with smould'ring
bolt 330

The lofty-thund'ring Jove his swift ship struck,
And, while his brave companions perished all
At once, how he the evil fate escaped ;
How to the isle Ogygia he came,
And to the nymph Calypso, who detained
In hollow grots and wooed him for her spouse,
Who nourished him, and said that she would make 335

Immortal, all his days from old age free,
But did not in his breast his mind persuade ;
How, after many labours, he had come
To the Phæacians' land, who as a God
Honoured him heartily, and in a ship
Conveyed him to his dear paternal land, 340
Bestowing brass and gold enough, and vests.

This was the last word which he spoke, when sleep
Sweet, both his limbs relaxing and his mind
Freeing from its anxieties, rushed on.

Blue-eyed Minerva then had other thoughts :
When in her mind Ulysses she supposed 345
Sufficiently refreshed with rest and sleep,
She roused the gold-throned harbinger of dawn
From ocean to convey the light to men.

From his soft couch Ulysses rose in haste,
And to his wife he thus commandment gave :

' My wife ! we both of us have had enough
' Of many labours ; thou in weeping here 350

‘For my care-fraught return ; me Jupiter
‘And other Gods, when eager to return,
‘Have kept by woes from my paternal land.
‘But since we both have now renewed our loves,
‘Take charge of my possessions in the house. 355
‘The sheep which those false suitors have consumed
‘I will replace as booty, and the Greeks
‘Others shall give till all the stalls they fill.
‘But to the farm well-wooded I will go,
‘To see my good sire who aye grieves for me. 360
‘This, wife ! I charge thee, prudent in thyself,
‘(For with the rising sun report will go
‘Forthwith about the suitors whom I slew)
‘Go to the upper chamber with thy maids ;
‘Sit there, nor any one regard nor ask.’

He spake, and round his shoulders girt his arms : 365
Telemachus, the herdsman, swineherd, then
He roused, and bade all take their warlike arms.
They disobeyed not, but were armed with brass,
Opened the doors and went ; Ulysses first.
Light was on earth, but them Minerva led
Quick from the city, cov’ring them with night.

BOOK XXIV.

CYLLENIAN Hermes called the suitors’ souls :
He held a rod, fair, golden, in his hands,
Wherewith he soothes men’s eyes whose e’er he wills,

And again rouses others from their sleep ;
With this he drove them ; they went gibb'ring on : 5
As when within a gloomy cave's recess
Bats gibb'ring flit, and of the link one falls
From off a rock, and they together cling,
So gibbering they went, and Mercury
Led them unharmed along the murky ways. 10
By ocean's streams and the Leucadian rock,
By the sun's gates and land of dreams they went,
And hasted to the mead of asphodel,
Where dwell the souls, the figures of the dead.
Achilles', son of Peleus, soul they found ; 15
Souls of Patroclus, brave Antilochus,
Of Ajax, who was best in face and form
Of all the Greeks, next Peleus' noble son.
Thus they were gathered round him, and the soul
Of Agamemnon, Atreus' son, came near 20
Wailing, and others were assembled round,
Who with him in Ægisthus' house had died.
Him first the soul of Peleus' son addressed :
' We said, O son of Atreus ! that thou wert 25
' Beloved by Jove, in thunder who delights,
' Beyond the other heroes all thy days,
' Because o'er many brave men thou wert king,
' In Trojan land where we Greeks suffered woes.
' But surely e'en to thee the first of all
' Destructive fate was destined to arrive,
' Which no man who was ever born escapes.
' Thou oughtest, still the honourable state 30
' Enjoying where thou wert the sovereign,
' To have met death and fate on Trojan land ;

‘Then would the Greeks have built thy tomb, and thou
‘Both for thyself and son have earned renown :
‘Now ’twas thy fate a wretched death to die.’

To him the soul of Atreus’ son replied :

35

‘O happy son of Peleus, like the Gods !

‘Achilles ! who in Troy didst die afar

‘From Argos, while around thee there were slain

‘The noblest sons of Trojans and of Greeks,

‘Fighting around thee ; mighty at full length

‘Thou in a whirlwind of the dust the while

‘Didst lie, forgetful of thine horsemanship.

40

‘We fought all day, nor should have ceased at all

‘From war, had Jove not stayed us by a storm.

‘When from the war we brought thee to the ships,

‘We laid thee on a bier, and thy fair flesh

‘With water warm and ointment purified.

45

‘Many hot tears the Greeks around thee shed

‘And cut their hair : thy mother from the sea

‘Came with th’ immortal sea-nymphs, when she heard

‘The tidings : awful clamour o’er the sea

‘Arose, and trembling seized on all the Greeks,

‘And they would rushing to the ships have gone,

50

‘Had not a man restrained them, Nestor, one

‘Who knew things old and many, and of whom

‘The counsel had before appeared the best ;

‘Who wishing well to them harangued and said :

“Stay, Argives ! fly not, children of the Greeks !

“Here with th’ immortal sea-nymphs from the sea 55

“His mother comes to meet her slaughtered son.”

‘He spake : the bold Greeks were restrained from flight.

‘The daughters of the old man of the sea

‘ Around thee weeping pitifully stood,
‘ And with ambrosial garments clothed thy limbs.
‘ All the nine Muses with their lovely voice 60
‘ Responsive wailed ; thou wouldst not there have seen
‘ A tearless Greek ; the sweet Muse moved them so.
‘ For seventeen days and nights in unison
‘ We mourned, immortal Gods and mortal men :
‘ On the eighteenth we gave thee to the fire, 65
‘ And many sheep and oxen round thee slew.
‘ Thou in the clothing of the Gods wast burnt,
‘ In copious ointment and in honey sweet.
‘ Many Greek heroes, horse and foot-men, clashed
‘ Their arms around thy pyre when thou wert burnt, 70
‘ And great the clamour rose. When Vulcan’s flame
‘ At last consumed thee, in the morning we,
‘ Achilles ! gathered up thy whit’ning bones
‘ In ointment and pure wine ; thy mother gave
‘ A golden bowl ; she said it was the gift
‘ Of Bacchus, and the famous Vulcan’s work. 75
‘ Noble Achilles ! there thy white bones lie ;
‘ Those of Menœtias’ son are with them mixed,
‘ The dead Patroclus, but apart were those
‘ Of him whom thou didst honour above all
‘ Thy other comrades, when Patroclus died,
‘ Antilochus ; and there around them we,
‘ The sacred army of the warlike Greeks,
‘ Heaped up a large and noble monument, 80
‘ Upon a cliff in the wide Hellespont,
‘ That from the sea it might be seen afar
‘ By those who are and those who will be born.
‘ Thy mother, having prayed the Gods, proposed 85

‘ In the mid course fair contests for the Greeks.
 ‘ Thou hast assisted at the burial
 ‘ Of many heroes, where youths gird themselves,
 ‘ And when a monarch dies prepare the games ;
 ‘ Those hadst thou seen thou wouldst have been
 amazed, 90
 ‘ Such were the beauteous contests which for thee
 ‘ The Goddess, Thetis with the silver feet,
 ‘ Prepared, for thou wert by the Gods beloved.
 ‘ So thou not even after death hast lost
 ‘ Thy name, Achilles ! but for evermore
 ‘ Great among all men will be thy renown.
 ‘ But what of this delight was mine, when I 95
 ‘ The war had ended ? for, on my return,
 ‘ Jove planned for me a miserable death,
 ‘ Slain by Ægisthus and my murd’rous wife.’

Such things they thus to one another spoke.
 Hermes, the messenger, came near and brought
 The suitors’ spirits by Ulysses slain : 100
 The two in wonder saw and met them straight,
 The soul of Agamemnon, Atreus’ son,
 Knew the illustrious Amphimedon,
 The son of Melaneus, for he had been
 When he abode in Ithaca his host.
 Him first the soul of Atreus’ son addressed : 105
 ‘ Amphimedon ! by what calamity
 ‘ Come ye beneath the gloomy earth, all men
 ‘ Select and of an equal age ? just so
 ‘ One in a city would select the best.
 ‘ Did Neptune kill you in the ships, a storm
 ‘ Of boist’rous winds arousing and long waves, 110

‘ Or did fierce men do violence ashore,
‘ While ye were cutting off their beeves and flocks
‘ Of sheep, or fighting for their towns and wives ?
‘ Tell when I ask ; I boast to be thy guest,
‘ For dost thou not remember when I went 115
‘ With God-like Menelaus to thine house,
‘ To urge Ulysses in our well-benched ships
‘ To follow in our company to Troy ?
‘ We were a whole month passing the broad sea,
‘ But on the brave Ulysses scarce prevailed.’

The spirit of Amphimedon replied : 120

‘ Most glorious son of Atreus ! king of men !
‘ Jove-nurtured Agamemnon ! I recall
‘ All as thou say’st, and all will tell thee true,
‘ The sad end of our death and how ’twas caused.
‘ We wooed Ulysses’ wife, now absent long, 125
‘ But she the hateful marriage neither would
‘ Refuse, nor did she to conclusion bring,
‘ Counselling death and gloomy fate for us.
‘ This other craft she in her mind devised :
‘ Within her halls a web she fixed and wove,
‘ Fine, beyond measure large, and said to us : 130
‘ “ Young suitors ! since Ulysses now is dead,
‘ “ Delay to urge my marriage on me till
‘ “ The web I finish, lest my threads be vain :
‘ “ For brave Laertes ’tis a winding sheet,
‘ “ When of long-sleeping death the fate shall come, 135
‘ “ That no Greek matron may indignant be
‘ “ That one so rich should die without a shroud.”
‘ She, while by day the ample web she wove,
‘ Unravell’d it by torch-light in the night.

‘ Three years by craft she thus misled the Greeks ; 140
‘ But when the fourth year came and hours went on
‘ With waning months, and many days were done,
‘ One of her women told who knew it well,
‘ And her we found unravelling the web ; 145
‘ So she completed it against her will.
‘ When she had wove and washed the ample web,
‘ She shewed a robe like to the sun or moon.
‘ Then evil fate at last Ulysses brought
‘ From somewhere to the land’s extremity, 150
‘ Where dwells the swineherd ; thither also came
‘ The dear son of Ulysses in a ship
‘ From sandy Pylos. Planning evil death
‘ Against the suitors, at the famous town
‘ The two arrived, Ulysses came the last,
‘ Telemachus had led the way before ; 155
‘ The swineherd brought him, clad in mean attire,
‘ Like to a wretched aged beggar-man,
‘ [Propped on a staff and clad in mean attire,]
‘ None of us knew ’twas he so suddenly
‘ Appearing, not e’en those who eldest were ; 160
‘ But we assailed him with foul words and blows.
‘ He for a time endured it patiently,
‘ In his own palace stricken and reviled.
‘ But when the plan of ægis-bearing Jove
‘ Aroused him, with Telemachus he took 165
‘ And in the chamber placed the beauteous arms,
‘ And closed the bolts ; but with much craftiness
‘ Advised his wife to make the bow and steel
‘ A contest for the suitors, and for us,
‘ Ill-fated men, the origin of death.

‘Not one of us could stretch the strong bow’s string ;
 ‘We were far short ; but when the mighty bow 170
 ‘Came to Ulysses’ hands, with chiding words
 ‘We all forbade that they should give the bow
 ‘To him, not even though he much might say :
 ‘Telemachus alone commanded it. 175
 ‘Divine Ulysses took it in his hands,
 ‘Stretched easily the bow and shot right through
 ‘The steel rings ; went and on the threshold stood,
 ‘Poured the swift arrows out, and terribly
 ‘Glared round, and struck the king Antinous.
 ‘Then at the rest he sent the grievous shafts 180
 ‘Aiming in front : they near each other fell.
 ‘’Twas manifest some God was their ally,
 ‘For quickly following with all their force
 ‘They killed them running round and round the house.
 ‘Unseemly groaning as their heads were struck
 ‘Arose, and all the pavement reeked with blood. 185
 ‘So died we, Agamemnon ! even now
 ‘Our bodies in Ulysses’ palace lie
 ‘Without funereal rites, for not as yet
 ‘Our friends in each one’s house are ’ware of it,
 ‘Who, having washed the black gore from our wounds,
 ‘Would lay our bodies out and mourn for us ;
 ‘For of the dead this is the privilege.’ 190

The soul of Atreus’ son to him replied :

‘Laertes’ happy son ! Ulysses wise !
 ‘Thou by great valour hast regained thy wife.
 ‘How excellent the sentiments of her,
 ‘Blameless Penelope, Icarius’ child !
 ‘How well Ulysses she in mem’ry kept ! 195

‘ Her virgin-wedded spouse, whose valour’s fame
‘ Will never perish, and th’ immortal Gods
‘ Will make for men on earth a lovely song
‘ In honour of the wise Penelope.
‘ Not so the child of Tyndarus devised
‘ Bad deeds, and slew her virgin-wedded spouse ;
‘ And among men a hateful song will be 200
‘ For her, and she has earned a bad report
‘ For women, e’en though one good deeds may do.’

Such words they thus to one another said,
Standing in Pluto’s house beneath the earth.
Ulysses and his friends, when from the town 205
They went, soon reached Laertes’ well-tilled farm,
Which he himself acquired and toiled at much.
There was his house ; a shed ran all around,
Where necessary servants used to eat
And sit and sleep, who at his pleasure worked. 210
Within there was an old Sicilian dame,
Who on the old man waited carefully,
There at the farm far distant from the town.
Ulysses to his son and servants said :

‘ Do ye go now the well-built house within,
‘ And quickly kill for supper of the swine 215
‘ Whiche’er is best ; but I will go and try
‘ My father whether he will recognise
‘ And with his eyes discern me, or perhaps
‘ Not know me being so long time away.’

Thus having said he to the servants gave
His warlike arms ; they quickly went within. 220
Ulysses near the fruitful orchard came
To try him, but he found nor Dolius near

Nor any of his servants or his sons
On ent'ring the great orchard ; they had gone
To gather thorns to be the orchard's fence,
And the old man had led them on the way. 225
In the well-cultivated orchard he
His father found alone, who hoed a plant,
And in a sordid dress, patched, mean, was clad ;
' And round his legs bound ragged ox-hide greaves
To 'scape the brambles, gloves upon his hands
Because of thorns, and on his head he wore 230
A cap of goat-skin, nourishing his grief.
Divine Ulysses when he saw him thus
Worn by old age, with sorrow in his mind,
By a tall pear-tree stood and dropped a tear :
He meditated in his mind, and thought 235
Whether to kiss his father and embrace,
And tell him all, and how that he had come,
And had arrived at his paternal land,
Or question first, and try him on all points.
This as he meditated seemed the best,
At first to try him with reproachful words. 240
Thus thinking, straight divine Ulysses went :
He with bowed head was digging round a plant,
When his illustrious son approached and said :
' Old man ! no want of skill is thine to tend
' An orchard, but thy care maintains it well : 245
' Nor plant, nor fig, nor vine, nor olive-tree,
' Nor pear, nor border in the garden lacks
' Thy care ; but something else I have to say ;
' Let not thy mind be angry ; no good care
' Tends thee thyself, but pitiful old age

- ‘Thou hast, and sadly squalid art besides, 250
‘And meanly clad. Not for thine idleness
‘Is ’t that thy master takes no care of thee;
‘Thy form and stature not as of a slave
‘Appear, for thou art like a kingly man;
‘Thou art like one who after bath and feast
‘Should softly sleep, the old men’s privilege. 255
‘But come now tell me this, and tell me true:
‘Whose serf art thou? whose orchard dost thou tend?
‘And truly tell me this that I may know,
‘If I indeed am come to Ithaca,
‘As that man told me, meeting me just now 260
‘As I came hither; one not very wise,
‘Nor who had patience or to tell me all
‘Or listen to my words, when I inquired
‘About a guest of mine, if yet he lives,
‘Or now is dead and is in Pluto’s house.
‘For I will tell thee, understand and hear: 265
‘I once received in hospitality
‘A man in my paternal land, who came
‘To my abode; none ever in my house
‘Of foreign guests came more beloved than he.
‘His race, he boasted was from Ithaca,
‘And he asserted that his father was
‘Laertes, of Arcesias the son. 270
‘Him I took home and entertained him well,
‘Treating him kindly, for my house was rich,
‘And gave him gifts of hospitality,
‘Such as were suitable; of well-wrought gold
‘I gave him seven talents, and I gave
‘A bowl all silver, covered o’er with flow’rs, 275

‘ Twelve single cloaks, as many coverlids,
‘ As many robes, as many vests besides,
‘ And after these four beauteous women, skilled
‘ In faultless works, for these he wished to take.’

To him his father, shedding tears, replied : 280
‘ Stranger ! in truth thou to the land art come
‘ Thou askest of ; proud bad men have it now.
‘ The presents thou hast given, numerous,
‘ Thou hast in vain bestowed : I would that thou
‘ Hadst found him here in Ithaca alive ;
‘ Then he, with gifts and hospitality 285
‘ Requiting, would have sent thee on thy way ;
‘ For this is just to whosoe’er begins.

‘ But come now, tell me this and tell me true :
‘ How many years have passed away since thou
‘ Thy hapless guest, my son, didst entertain ?
‘ For son he was, ill-fated, whom afar 290
‘ From friends and home the fishes in the sea
‘ Devoured, or who upon the land has been
‘ A prey of beasts and birds ; since not for him
‘ His mother wept when she composed his limbs,
‘ Nor I, his father, we who gave him birth ;
‘ Nor his well-dowried wife Penelope
‘ Bewailed her husband, as ’twas fit she should, 295
‘ Closing his eyes on the funereal couch,
‘ For of the dead this is the privilege.
‘ And truly tell me this that I may know ;
‘ Who and whence art thou ? where thy city, where
‘ Thy parents ? where the ship which hither brought
‘ Thee and thy noble friends ? or didst thou come
‘ A passenger on board another’s ship, 300

‘ While they have landed thee and gone away ? ’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘ I will then truly all these things relate ;

‘ I am from Alybas, inhabiting

‘ A noble house, and am Apheidor’s son

‘ Who of King Polypēmon was the son ; 305

‘ Eperītus my name ; the Deity

‘ Hither a wanderer from Sicily

‘ Brought me against my will ; my ship is moored

‘ Out in the country, from the city far.

‘ This is the fifth year since Ulysses went 310

‘ Away and left my country, luckless man !

‘ Yet surely when he went the birds were good

‘ And favourable ; I rejoiced in them

‘ When I dismissed him, and he too rejoiced.

‘ Each of us hoped in hospitality

‘ To join again and splendid presents give.’

He spake ; a black cloud o’er Laertes came 315

Of grief ; and taking up in both his hands

The ashy dust, upon his hoary head

He poured it down, and groaned incessantly.

Ulysses’ mind was stirred ; sharp agony

His features shook when on his sire he gazed :

Bounding he kissed, embraced him, and thus spoke : 320

‘ Here I my very self, O father ! am,

‘ For whom thou seekest ; in the twentieth year

‘ I have arrived at my paternal land.

‘ But cease from weeping and thy tearful moan :

‘ I tell thee plainly (great the need for haste),

‘ The suitors in our palace I have slain, 325

‘ Requiring violence and evil deeds.’

Laertes in reply addressed him thus :

‘ If truly thou my son Ulysses com’st,
‘ Tell me some clear sign that I may believe.’

The wise Ulysses answered him and said : 330

‘ First with thine eyes regard this scar, which once
‘ A boar upon Parnassus with white tusk
‘ Inflicted on me when I thither went.
‘ Thou and my honoured mother sent me to
‘ Autolycus, my mother’s father dear,
‘ To take the gifts which, when he hither came,
‘ He promised and declared that he would give. 335
‘ I will besides recount to thee the trees
‘ Which once thou gav’st me, when a child I asked
‘ For each and through the garden followed thee :
‘ By them we passed and thou didst name them all :
‘ Thou gavest thirteen pear, ten apple-trees, 340
‘ And forty fig-trees, and didst promise too
‘ To give me fifty plots, each sown with corn
‘ Between the rows of vines, and varied grapes
‘ Are on them, when Jove’s seasons weigh them down.’

So spake he ; but his knees and heart grew faint, 345
Knowing the sure signs which Ulysses gave.
He threw his arms around his much-loved son ;
Him to himself divine Ulysses drew
Fainting, but, when he gained his breath again
And thought was re-collected in his mind,
He answering him addressed him in these words :
‘ O father Jove ! ye Gods are surely still 350
‘ In high Olympus, if the suitors have
‘ Paid for their wicked insolence indeed.
‘ But now within my mind I sadly fear

‘That all the Ithacans may come and send
‘Youths quickly to the Cephallenian towns.’ 355

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

‘Take heart, nor be this to thy mind a care ;
‘But to the house which near the orchard lies,
‘(For I have thither sent Telemachus
‘The herdsman and the swineherd) let us go,
‘That they with speed a supper may prepare.’ 360

The two thus speaking to the fair house went :

When to the house they came, Telemachus,
The herdsman, and the swineherd, there they found,
Cutting much flesh and mixing ruddy wine.
But the Sicilian hand-maid meanwhile bathed
Magnanimous Laertes in his house, 365
And rubbed with ointment, and around him threw
A beauteous cloak : Minerva standing near
Enlarged the chieftain’s limbs and made them seem
Greater and stouter than they were before.
Forth from the bath he came ; his son admired 370
When he beheld him like th’ immortal Gods,
And calling to him spoke these wingèd words :
‘Father ! sure some one of th’ immortal Gods
‘Has made thee noble in thy form and size.’

The wise Laertes answered him and said : 375

‘O father Jove ! Minerva ! Phœbus ! would
‘Such as I was when Neritus I took,
‘The well-built city on the continent,
‘When of the Cephallenians I was king,
‘Such in our house I had been yesterday,
‘With armour on my shoulders, to stand by 380
‘And drive away the suitors ; I should then

‘Have loosed the knees of many in the house,
‘And thou wouldst have rejoiced thy mind within.’

Such words they thus to one another spoke :
When from toil ceasing they prepared the feast
They sate in order on the seats and thrones ; 385
Then on the meal laid hands, and near them came
Old Dolius, and with th’ old man his sons,
Tired with their labours ; for their mother went
(The old Sicilian dame who brought them up,
And tended the old man with loving care
When old age weighed him down) to summon them. 390
When they Ulysses saw and recognized,
They in the house stood in astonishment ;
But he reproved them thus with honeyed words :
‘Sit down, old man ! to supper, and do ye
‘Forget your wonder : we within the house, 395
‘Eager to lay our hands upon the feast,
‘Are waiting long, expecting you to come.’

He spake ; and Dolius went to him straight,
Extending both his hands ; Ulysses’ hand
He took, and kissing it upon the wrist
Spake and addressed to him these wingèd words :
‘O dear one ! since thou hast returned to us 400
‘Much longing for but not expecting thee,
‘And since the Gods themselves have brought thee
home,
‘Hail thou ! and have much happiness ! and may
‘The Gods bestow on thee prosperity !
‘But truly tell me this that I may know :
‘Is wise Penelope of thy return
‘Assured, or shall we send a messenger ?’ 405

The wise Ulysses answered him and said :

× ‘Old man ! she knows ; why troublest thou thyself?’

He spake and sat upon the polished seat.

So too the sons of Dolius with words

Greeted Ulysses, clinging to his hands, 410

And by their father Dolius sate down.

Thus they within were busied with the feast :

But fame on all sides through the city went,

With tidings of the suitors’ death and fate.

Men when they heard it flocked from ev’ry side, 415

With cries and groans before Ulysses’ house.

They the dead bodies from the palace brought,

And buried each their own ; but those who were

From other cities, placing in swift ships,

They gave to fishermen to take them home ;

And grieving to the forum went in crowds. 420

When they were gathered and assembled there,

Eupeithes rose before them and harangued ;

For in his mind lay unforgetful grief

For him whom first Ulysses slew, his son

Antinous, and thus he weeping said : 425

‘Friends ! for the Greeks this man has great deeds
planned ;

‘First, taking many brave men in his ships,

‘He lost the hollow ships and lost their crews :

‘Then of the Cephalenians these men far

‘The noblest he on his return has slain.

‘Come ! let us go ere he to Pylos haste 430

‘Or divine Elis, where th’ Epeans rule,

‘Or we shall ever after be disgraced ;

‘Since a reproach ’twould be for future men

‘To hear that we had not avenged ourselves
 ‘Upon our sons’ and brothers’ murderers.
 ‘For me no pleasure would it be to live ; 435
 ‘Soon would I die and be among the dead.
 ‘Come ! let us go, lest first they cross the sea.’

He weeping spake and pity seized the Greeks :
 But Medon and the bard divine approached,
 When sleep had left them, from Ulysses’ house, 440
 And in the midst stood ; wonder seized on each ;
 Them Medon, knowing prudent things, addressed :
 ‘Hear me, ye men of Ithaca ! ’twas not
 ‘Against the will of the immortal Gods
 ‘Ulysses planned these deeds ; for I myself
 ‘Saw an immortal God who stood close by 445
 ‘Ulysses, like to Mentor in his form.
 ‘Fronting Ulysses the immortal God
 ‘Seemed one while to encourage him, and then
 ‘Urging the suitors drove them through the house,
 ‘And one upon another down they fell.’

He spake, and pale fear seized upon them all. 450
 The hero Alitherses, aged son
 Of Mastor, thus addressed them : he alone
 Saw what was past and what was yet to come,
 And wishing well to them harangued and said :
 ‘Now, men of Ithaca ! hear what I say :
 ‘These deeds, my friends ! by your own fault were
 caused : 455
 ‘Nor me, nor Mentor of the people chief,
 ‘Did ye obey to make your sons desist
 ‘From foolishness, who did a mighty deed,
 ‘Wasting the goods, dishonouring the wife

‘Of a brave man who never, as they thought,
‘Would home return : now let it thus be done ; 460
‘Obey me as I say, nor let us go,
‘Lest some of us a self-sought evil find.’

He spake, and some with clamour great arose,
More than the half ; the rest collected staid,
For his speech had not pleased them in their mind, 465
But they obeyed Eueithes, and with speed
Rushed to their arms ; but when around their limbs
They had the shining brass put on, they stood
Before the wide-wayed city, gathered thick.

Eueithes in his madness led them on,
And said that he his son’s death would avenge ; 470
Yet no return was he about to have,
But there upon himself his fate to bring.

Minerva then Jove, Saturn’s son, addressed :

‘O father ! son of Saturn ! chief of kings !
‘Tell what I ask : what does thy mind conceal ?
‘Wilt thou the evil war and dreadful fight 475
‘Still longer cause, or on both sides make peace ?’

To her the cloud-compelling Jove replied :

‘My child ; why ask me this ? for didst thou not
‘Devise this plan thyself, that when he came
‘Ulysses on these men should vengeance take ? 480
‘Do as thou wilt ; I tell thee what is right :
‘Since now Ulysses has avenged himself
‘Upon the suitors, let us faithful oaths
‘Conclude, that he should ever be the king,
‘And we make of their sons’ and brothers’ death
‘Oblivion ; let each the other love 485
‘As formerly ; let wealth and peace abound.’ ✓

Minerva thus, who eager was before,
He urged, and down Olympus' tops she rushed.
When they had satisfied their wish for food,
Divine Ulysses thus began to speak : 490
'Let one go out to see if they come near.'

He spake ; a son of Dolius went forth
As he commanded, on the threshold stood,
And saw them all approaching ; then forthwith
He to Ulysses spake these wingèd words :
'The men approach ; quick let us arm ourselves.' 495

He spake : they rushed and put their armour on ;
Four with Ulysses, Dolius' six sons,
With them Laertes too and Dolius,
Grey-headed warriors, by necessity
Their armour took. When they had clad themselves
About their limbs in shining brass, the doors 500
They opened and went forth ; Ulysses led.

To them Minerva, child of Jove, came near,
Resembling Mentor both in form and voice.
Divine Ulysses seeing her rejoiced,
And to Telemachus, his dear son, said : 505

'Telemachus ; thou now thyself wilt learn,
'When men are fighting and the best are proved,
'Not to disgrace thy father's family,
'Us who in time before were eminent
'In strength and valour over all the earth.'

Prudent Telemachus replied and said : 510
'Thou, if thou wilt, dear father ! shalt behold
'That, as is in me I do not disgrace,
'As thou exhortest me, thy family.'

He spake : Laertes then rejoiced and said :

‘O ye dear Gods ! what day is this for me !
‘Much I rejoice that son and grandson have 515
‘In valour with each other rivalry !’

Blue-eyed Minerva standing by him said :

‘Son of Arcesias ! of all my friends
‘By far the dearest ! since thou hast invoked
‘Blue-eyed Minerva and her father Jove,
‘Quickly thy long spear brandish and send forth.’

Minerva spake, and courage in him breathed. 520
Then, offering a prayer to great Jove’s child,
Quick his long spear he brandished and sent forth,
And struck Eupeithes through his brass-cheeked helm.
It kept not off the spear, the brass passed through ;
Falling he sounded and his armour clashed. 525

Ulysses and his noble son attacked
And struck the foremost with their swords and spears,
And would have slain them all and their return
Prevented, if Minerva, child of Jove,
Had not cried loudly and the people checked : 530
‘Cease from the grievous war, ye Ithacans !
‘That without bloodshed ye may parted be.’

So spake Minerva : pale fear on them seized,
And from the terrified men’s hands their arms
Flew to the ground, when thus the Goddess spake, 535
And for life anxious to the town they turned.

Divine Ulysses shouted terribly,
And, like an eagle, gath’ring strength rushed on.
Jove hurled a flaming bolt ; it fell before
The blue-eyed one of mighty father born ; 540
And to Ulysses thus Minerva spoke :
‘Ulysses ! wise ! Laertes’ noble son !

‘ Cease! check the strife of all-destroying war,
‘ Lest the loud-thund’ring Jove be wroth with thee.’

Minerva spake, and he with joy obeyed. 545

Minerva, child of ægis-bearing Jove,
Made treaties afterwards between them both, ✓
Resembling Mentor both in form and voice.

THE END.

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